MODERN INDIAN CULTURE

DHURJATI PRASAD MUKERJI

HIND KITABS LTD

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A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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TO
MY DEAR
MAKUN

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

I am grateful to the Indian Press and the public for the welcome they extended to my humble efforts at seizing the specific character of Modern Indian culture and evaluating it. The former gave many valuable suggestions, some of which I have acted upon. But the advice of my friends, and mostly they are my public, to elaborate my thesis still remains unheeded, though I have sought to revise and reset my materials to the best of my ability and opportunity. Barring half a dozen or so new books and pamphlets available to me after 1942, little of material significance for my main conclusion has been written. Thus for example, B. N. Datta's *Studies in Indian Social Polity,* N. C. Sinha's *Studies in Indo-British Economy Hundred Years Ago*, and W. C. Smith's *Modern Islam in India* support my findings in Chapters III and II respectively. A. Yusuf Ali's *A Cultural History of India during British Period* contains interesting matter, but it is not exactly a scientific treatise. (This book had been published in 1940, but it reached me late.) *Modern India and the West,* edited by L. S. S. O'Malley, shares the merits and demerits of quite a few other volumes issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. It is well-documented, heavy, yet subtly and dispassionately weighted in favour of the West in the name of science and scholarship. Dr Rajendra Prasad's *India Divided* and Dr Ambedkar's *Pakisthan or the Partition of India,* I have found occasionally useful. The last volume of P. Sorokin's *Social and Cultural Dynamics* and his *Crisis of Our Age* are mines of information in all cultural matters. But I am not sure if for my limited purpose I have really gained from Prof. Sorokin's stupendous scholarship and ob-

vious conclusions. I am however obliged to him for his fruitful, but not always logical, idea of social types and corresponding culture-mentalities. Pareto's lumber has been reduced on subsequent thought. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's *The Discovery of India,* though written inside the jail, a place not quite congenial to scholarly efforts, is a brilliant interpretation of Indian history. More than the professional historian he is seized of the sense of history.

Meanwhile, certain important events have taken place in India. The post-1942 oppression was a nightmare for all thinking Indians who were outside jails. Between the rigour of lawless laws and the complete disruption of economic life no creative activity was possible. Students suffered; teachers suffered; intellectuals suffered, as the people did. The devoted attention of 'watchers', shortage of books, famine, incarceration of people's representatives permitted them to exist, but encouraged many anti-social tendencies to grow under the cover of war-effort. Profiteers flourished like poisonous fungi; and India was split into two 'nations'. India's feeling of social obligation and India's sense of cultural unity, two of her precious possessions, were equally liquidated. Nothing, not even the Atlantic Charter, was allowed to fill the vacuum. No wonder that hatred rushed in like typhoon. Today if the anti-British feeling has declined, the quantum of hatred remains the same, only flowing in a different direction. Socialist ideas, however, have come to stay, although their connexion with a new phase of Hindu-Muslim-Western culture, or with the need of positive cultural reconstruction of the country in the context of the world, has not yet been fully grasped by those who follow them.

Today is the Independence Day for India. Strictly speaking, it is a two-dominions' day. The manner of India's division has been marked by violence, for which

the speedy transfer of power is not enough human compensation. The traumatic birth of Pakisthan may haunt the culture of both Pakisthan and India for many a year to come. Violent origins have an ugly habit of leaving marks on development. How to get rid of such stains and psychoses will be an important problem of culture in tomorrow's India.*

Lucknow
August 15, 1947

D. P. MUKERJI

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

Modern Indian culture is a unique social phenomenon from every point of view. A few competent books have been written on it, no doubt, but they deal with this aspect or that. The pattern is usually missed, and when it is not, the main thread is identified with nationalism. The treatment also suffers from over or under-statement. Besides, if culture is the whole social process, the proper study of its development should be on sociological lines. A sociological point of view reveals the silent process of social change going on beneath our prominent behaviours. Once the nature of that process is understood, the positive achievements of modern India in various spheres, as well as such negative activities as have increased today the social distance between those very communities who had co-operatively built up the common traditions of living and thought, fall in their place in the big design that is

*The unconscionable delay in publication is mainly traceable to the unsettled condition in the country while the lag, easily noticeable in these pages, is due to the speed of events when it is not explicable in terms of my routine-duty.

modern Indian culture. The 'nature' of the Indian 'society', which is the context of this culture, is neither the nature of the root nor the nature of the flower, neither the actuality of recorded history nor the potentiality of fulfilment. It is the artifice of an unreal class-structure, unrelated to societal principles. How this artifice has worked is the story of this volume.

My criticisms, and omissions too, of men of letters and artists are, therefore, strictly impersonal. How can one minimize the importance of the deeds of our great men? But, in relation to what makes, holds and unfolds, like pearls they are, occasioned by the intrusion, of a grain of foreign matter between the skin and the shell. A sociologist interested in the process of culture-formation and its dynamics must show up that particle of sand. He must not desist from pointing out that for ten or a hundred pearls, a million oysters have to be opened and rejected.

My original intention was to bring out a bigger volume with more details in illustration of my thesis. The paper-shortage called for economy. I then wanted to delete the references altogether. But short references were necessary, said my publisher. So, here they are, only the relevant ones chosen from the books at hand, and given at the end. Others more valuable could certainly be given.

A word more about these references. If there are 'n' sciences, there must be a 'n+1'th science. We have a number of humanistic studies in the social sciences, and the sociologist, who is the 'n+1'th scientist, cannot but depend upon the findings in those 'n' fields. In fact, his pickings are the largest.

At the same time, he must refer to his own experience. So, if I have borrowed much from books and journals, I have had also my personal contacts which gave me numerous chances to look into the process from inside. The writers, artists, musicians,

scholars, and the active workers in other spheres, who have inspired me, directly and indirectly, by their talk and guidance, are much greater in number than those to whom I have alluded in these pages.

Many students and friends have helped me, both by translation and discussion, in understanding the spirit of the work that is being done in the Indian languages I do not know.

My thanks are also due to the Editors of the *Vishwabharati, The Cultural Heritage of India* (Ram Krishna Centenary Volume), and the *Social Welfare,* where some of the material used in Chapters II and VI of this volume first appeared. To my brother, Prof. Bimalaprasad Mukerji, Rev. L. Schiff, and Mr. M. Chalapati Rao of the *National Herald,* my debt of gratitude is deep. My son, Sreeman Kumar Prasad Mukerji, has given me his time and energy in the preparation of manuscripts. He has also verified many references.

The University of Lucknow
July 1942

D. P. MUKERJI

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CHAPTER I

THE MYSTICAL OUTLOOK

There is such a thing as Indian Culture. Non-Indians recognize its existence, and we Indians sense it. Equated with Hindu philosophy at its highest, it means that peculiar relation between the soul and Brahman which is expressed in the phrases *'Soham'* and *'Tattvamasi'*. But a good many things, e.g. the average individual's views about the ordering of society and his own functions therein, his behaviour and distinctive outlook, are missing from this equation. As a social and historical process, however, Indian culture represents certain common traditions that have given rise to a number of general attitudes. The major influences in their shaping have been Buddhism, Islam, and Western commerce and culture. It was through the assimilation and conflict of such varying forces that Indian culture became what it is today, neither Hindu nor Islamic, neither a replica of the Western modes of living and thought nor a purely Asiatic product. Obviously, the contribution of each factor cannot be assessed with any high degree of scientific accuracy. Many people[1] think that the Aryan spirit is the core of our traditions, while others feel that but for Western culture India would have remained primitive. Yet, historically speaking, the indigenous and the incoming forces had welded Indian society into a more or less organic whole, until Western commerce arrived. Even at the end of the eighteenth century, the Indian social order was, for the most part, equivalent to the discharge of obligations to the family, to the caste and to the village panchayats working on the basis of economic self-sufficiency; and in addition, to the guilds and corporations on the basis of trade and commerce between urban areas.[2]

With agriculture as the main, and commerce as the specialized vocation, Indian society pursued the smooth tenor of its ways except for occasional disturbances caused by the need for accommodating new functional groups, e.g. the Arab traders in the western and the southern coasts of India. In Bengal, the retreating Buddhist sects and advancing Islam caused a stiffening of the rules of conduct—for the upper castes; but no other change was immediately noticeable among the rest. By and large, Indian society was a 'closed' one[3], if it was not static. Naturally, when it remained so over a long period, it developed, in P. Sorokin's language[4], the 'ideational' traits of culture with more or less defined views on the nature of needs and ends and the means of their satisfaction, i.e. of social activity, with specific aesthetic, moral, and social values and systems, and with certain common notions of Truth, Knowledge, Self, and the Ultimate Reality[5]. In other words, the Hindu, the Buddhist and the Muslim[6] had together evolved a *Weltanschauung* in which the fact of Being was of lasting significance, with all that it meant in the way of indifference to the transient and the sensate and of preoccupation with the processes in which the little self was subordinated to, and ultimately to be dissolved in, the Supreme Reality. Practically, for the individual, it meant that the proper observance of customs and rituals released him for the task of controlling his inner life. For the society, it connoted a hierarchy in which those values alone were permanent which led to spiritual realization, those events alone were positive which marked the stages in that march, and those persons alone were leaders whose supreme attainment, if not the only engagement in life, was spiritual culture, bliss and benefit. This world-view is usually called mystical. Before the impact of Western commerce, it was the ruling view in India. After the British rule, the impact of which is of a different order, it pretends to be so. Now, Indian

society is no longer a closed one, and Indian culture, naturally, is only a pseudo-ideational system. The mystics' part, which was revolutionary in the stabler periods of Indian history, can hardly be so today. Infiltration alone can be their tactics.[7]

There is a strong opinion that mysticism is a typically Indian product, and that consequently, the Indian view is nothing if not mystical. But students of comparative religion and theology have traced the essential elements in the personal experiences of mystics all over the world and at different times, and found them to be similar.[8] Passivity, ineffability and beatitude are common for the Christian, the Sufi, the Indian and the Chinese saint. In the first stage, the mystic everywhere is emptied of his normal thoughts and emotions and begins to feel that he is living a different life. Such a depersonalization usually brings about the dark-night-of-the-soul state. But it passes, and when other emotions and thoughts fill the void the mystic-seeker does not know them or fails to describe them in the older terms. This is the state of bewilderment, wonder, and passive submission. Once he is thus possessed he speaks of himself as deified. A further stage is reached when the unison is complete, and action is equal to non-action in the sense that both are irrelevant when Becoming is suspended. Certain mystics stop at a particular stage, while those who run the whole gamut are everywhere few in number. The former occasionally descend to the sphere of action and become prophets, while the latter remain models in so far as they sum up in their lives the full course of spiritual evolution. It is difficult to detect the Indian-ness of the mystics' mental make-up and discipline, *pace* the special Indian techniques, although it is easy to hold that their influence on society has been greater here than elsewhere. Aye, it has been even greater than in China (or in Iran) where the objective situation has not been dissimilar. This fact accounts

for the notion that Indian culture is primarily mystical, or religious, whereas Chinese culture is basically ethical[9].

It looks otherwise plausible too. Here banias cheat, communities and political parties fight one another, in the name of religion. Examinees begin their answers, clerks and shop-keepers begin their work with an invocation to their favourite deities at the top of their books. A good division at the examination, a rapid promotion in service and a smart deal in the bazaar or the Stock Exchange can all be secured by God's grace administered through a religious preceptor. In a mass observation conducted a few years ago, there were as many as six verbal references to the Godhead by pedestrians in the course of a twenty minutes' brisk walk along a busy street in an Indian city. The business-quarters yielded nine references in a quarter of an hour. Comparative data are not available, but the Indian figures seem to be a record. Leaving aside the marital beds and the divine attendance thereupon, it is well known how our public affairs are conducted in a 'religious' spirit. Purely on the population basis, Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, Mahatma Gandhi, M. Stalin and President Roosevelt have been the most prominent leaders of the world today. Winston Churchill, Hitler, Mussolini and Franco have also had vast influence over their countrymen. Of these eight, three, viz. the Marshal, the President, and the Mahatma are devout, and two, Mussolini and Franco, are aware of the political bearings of religion. Stalin and Churchill are non-religious, the former content with tolerating the popular identification of himself with the "little Father", and the latter finding religion unsuited for his type of eloquence and drive[10] except when God has to be praised for Victory. Fairly detailed records are available of the performances of these eight leaders in their private and public capacities, but none reveals that religious frame of mind and outlook that we associate with Gandhiji. The Marshal regularly reads the

Bible, but he is not a Christian Scientist; the Presidential messages were often inflated with prophetic content and soulful prayers, but the President was no Seventh Day Adventist. None waits for divine inspiration and none is admired because of that; none mixes up politics with religion even in his most millennial moments; none betrays the religious urge for perfection, the puritanic fervour for the Godhead, as the Mahatma does. The point about these personal traits is that they are immediately seized by the Indian (the European and the American too) as *typically* Indian. But be it noted that it is Gandhi's influence alone that makes plausible the current notion about Indian politics being fundamentally religious. There are more Swamis and Maulanas on our political platforms than anywhere else. Communists count many of them as their fellow-travellers. If anything, the incidence of religious emotions upon Muslims is greater. The demand for Pakistan is usually understood by the average Muslim as a religious demand. Its opposition too is mostly on religious grounds. To crown it all, the Government of India and foreign observers alike endorse the notion. When the drive against Communism was first undertaken in India, the main line of propaganda was conducted against its anti-religious and materialistic, and therefore, anti-Indian spirit. And it went through very well; in fact, it is selling very well today with our Simonpure nationalists. Outsiders who never came to India, great men like Goethe, Schopenhauer, Max Muller—Germans mostly, Emerson, Whitman and other Americans, have also certified that we are intensely spiritual, that there is more theological subtlety in the lanes of an Indian village than in the campus of a European or an American University.[12] Between the occupied and the unoccupied areas of democratic powers we alone remain preoccupied with matters of the spirit.[13]

Much of this argument is not tenable. Anthropologists, for example, can point out that many of these 'reli-

gious' traits are primitive, and economists may proclaim that they are the features of a rural economy stabilized for long. Marxists can even say that India is in that stage of the development of her productive forces where economic conflicts take the shape of fights between gods.[14] Sensible political scientists may think that we are religious without our willing it. Historians of Indian philosophy may suggest that our thought was not always so entangled with theology, and may even quote from the various schools of Hindu materialism to indicate the positivist context of Hindu culture. Indians must have lived and behaved in this world, and evidences[15] show that certain sections lived pretty well, as sophisticated individuals. Today also, they have not ceased to exist as hungry men and women desirous of higher standards in their earthly living. And yet, no social scientist in India has got a chance against the scientists of transcendental knowledge, no non-theological school of metaphysics did have or can have any considerable prestige, no glowing account of Indian Chemistry,[16] Medicine, or of Kama-Shastra can disabuse our minds of the idea that life in India always hangs by the Divine Absolute. Our material conditions, our political subjection, our nationalism conspire in the currency of the story started by the West for its own purposes that Indians, by and large, are given to God, that they are addicts to religion, that both the body and the soul of Indian culture are annexed and possessed by the Divinity.[17] Meanwhile, merely mundane affairs such as administration, fooding and clothing and economic betterment are left to the poor materialist of the West.

The conclusion is that we may or may not be religious but there is no doubt of the fact that the religious label has stuck to our culture. Our disgust with the large number of crude ones among our religious customs and traditions, our impatience with heavenly intrusions into our politics and economics, and our will to create

and substitute other traditions—none should blind us to the existence of that label or to the logical and non-logical reasons why that label has stuck so long. When the Indian progressive youth dismisses religion as an opium, he is not only ignoring social facts but the historical process itself by which these have assumed the attached values. In any case he must know, before he makes history, what materials he is up against. A socialist should also be a student of sociology, which, today in India, is a study of popular errors and beliefs, fictions, myths and legends.

The fact of the matter is that in India the mystic tradition did play an important part in society and that its chief exponents were the social revolutionaries of their days. The mystics began to influence the cultural process soon after the Aryans settled in India. Certain Vedic texts show clearly that the Brahmavadins were from very early times draining the Aryan cult of its positive social substance by the double process of preoccupying themselves with the search for the Absolute and showing up the hollowness of the Aryan rituals.[18] It is also clear that this class of people found themselves basking under the patronage of princes after their career of protests. Their non-conformity did not stand in the way of blessing the Kshatriya order and cursing the lower ones.[19] But their high conduct made ample amends for this isolation from the life of the people. Intellectually, their function was both critical and constructive. There is an extremely healthy freshness in the atmosphere of the Upanishads, a spirit of adventure which paid scant courtesy to caution and pushed men and women forward to high endeavour. In the Upanishads there is no counsel to wait or to turn back. 'Forward' was the cry.[20] Obviously, theirs was the pioneer's risk-taking urge. Culture was in the making. But it was soon made. The isolation and the subsequent alliance with the princely order did not enable these mystics to forge fur-

ther ahead. Our knowledge of the eventual social consequences of the teachings of the Rishis stops at their attempts to introduce the Varnasrama Dharma and incorporate the converted tribes into the pyramidal structure with themselves at the cone. The Brahmavadi Rishis in the forest-asylums do no more for the cause of sociology than the Government model farms in India do for the science of Indian agriculture, unless we choose to think that non-social conduct is a homage to society. Nobody denies the value of the residents of the forest *asrams* as examples, but examples lose their dynamics when the social order has been fixed. Whatever is of general social importance in the work of the Rishis in the later stages is summed up in the caste-system, the New Order of the First Millennium before the Birth of Christ. Since then, the caste-system became the datum of Indian society to be accepted ultimately even by the rebels, the Muslims and the Christians alike.[21] Nobody in India has been able to avoid it, not even in the Universities, which are manned by the nationalists, nor in the governments, which are run by the civilians. The erstwhile dissenters had become respectable, the open society of the Upanishads had been closed, the gods had lost their efficacy, and the Brahmins came in their stead willing to intercede on receipt of adequate reward.

The Buddhist contributions to Indian culture are well known. Probably, they have been over-emphasized by European scholars who found the ethical aspects of Buddhism more congenial to their spirit than the spiritual side of Brahminical culture. Still, what remains is of inestimable value. Sakyamuni developed the doctrines of individual dissent and freedom implicit in the Upanishads. The securing of merit by holy deeds, the ideas of the *Rita*[22] and the attainment of *moksha* in this life, of *maitri* and *ahimsa,* are all there. What the Buddha did was to popularize them among the people who had been so long debarred from their knowledge.

Sanskrit was not used, nor was initiation by the priest necessary. The result was that the concept of Karma ceased to be esoteric and completely displaced the gods. Once this was done, the *Kamya* sacrifices for propitiation and achievement of desire disappeared among large sections of the masses. The logical corollary of *maitri* and *ahimsa* was also the stoppage of animal sacrifices. "Be a lamp unto yourself, be a refuge unto yourself" were the last words of the Lord. But the lamp was ultimately extinguished and the refuge turned into monastic caves. The protest against Brahminism petered out and a rigid monachism was established. By the end of the eighth century Buddhism was on the retreat in India. Outside, it continued to act as a leaven. Meanwhile, however, it had produced first-rate philosophical works, magnificent literature, painting and architecture—things which thrill us even today. Yet, one cannot get over the fact that Buddhism was finally merged into popular Hinduism so completely that a Bengali Hindu is really a misnomer.[23] Buddhism had offended against life in various ways; it had imposed *nivritti* over *pravritti* and the monastic order over the laity; it had insulted the mother and the wife, raised Karma into a non-human agency, and sobered the Aryan Kshatriya's urge for conquest and expansion. The Lord's silence over the nature of the Ultimate Reality and of life after death was ominous. Later on, only the drone of '*mani padme hum*' would fill that void. In short, Buddhism took the mind of man away from the earthly processes of culture. Its humanism became thinner and thinner until the stage was ready for a comeback of the gods. This time, their shapes were monstrous, as a visit to the *Gumphas* and a study of the Tantrik texts would amply demonstrate. *Maitri* and *ahimsa* lay low for centuries. If we understand culture sociologically, we should not stop with Aswaghosha, Ajanta or the Sanchi tope; account will also have to be taken of the

seeds of decay which Buddhism contained in its outlook on life, its incapacity to produce a social order of higher level—a fact which Spengler rightly understands as nihilism[24]—while it was constantly sapping the foundations of the old. The Buddha had preached his simple gospel to mankind, but it was the urban population that annexed it. The lower classes remained content with the shell of the Hindu symbols, and the upper classes killed the simple doctrines of the Buddha by logomachy. Finally, they too would lose their habits of discussion in the maze of Tantrik symbolism. How exactly Buddhism spent itself in the land of its birth is not known.[25] One would think that the social process was similar to what happened in China as described by Dr Hu Shih.[26] The Buddhist celibacy was the opposite of the first three stages of the Varnasrama; its mendicancy could succeed only with the princely order and the Sresthis, who in their interests would love to patronize the monks, but it would not appeal to the average householder because its asceticism ran counter to human instincts exercisable in the family-system. The hair-splitting analysis and the abstruse metaphysics could ill satisfy the urgent, simple, ethical and spiritual needs of the people. Above all, the Buddhist scheme of salvation was anti-social in its skipping over the all-important stage in which the duties towards society would be performed. No amount of casuistry in permitting social life would make its function normal. The monastic order was no substitute for the social order. From the point of view of social economy again, Buddhism did nothing new. In the Buddhist period of Indian history, caste-corporations, trade and industrial guilds developed.[27] But a close student of history would see more than mere hints of the same in the pre-Buddhist period. The entire corpus of post-Vedic literature is littered with references to artisans and mechanics, syndicates of traders and bankers. Even the commercial class had already come into existence.

Money-lenders were also briskly carrying on their business, so much so that need was felt for controlling their depredations. Fifteen per cent was the rate above which Manu would interfere.[28] Therefore, all that we find clearly in the Buddhist period was the stepping forward of the functional castes and the middle class of traders and business into the foreground.

In this context of a contrary outlook and lack of originality in the throwing up of a new social order, we find a resurgence of the lower forms of Hinduism in Buddhist garb,[29] a revival of Vaishnavism[30] and of various Brahminical doctrines associated with the Vedanta.[31] A big dose of persecution was no doubt there to supplement the renaissance. Popular Hinduism took over the Lord himself as Siva,[32] the Bodhisattvas were duly given their niches, the Buddhist Heaven and Hell found their place, and the new Hindu monastic orders imitated the discipline and the dress of the shaved monks. Sankara himself was dubbed a Buddhist in disguise. To watch the Brahminical counter-reformation at its best we should read the history of Vijayanagar. There, the great Brahmin commentator, Sayana, was also a minister of the Crown, and his brother, Madhava, was ready at hand to support his sophistries. The Buddhist culture that had appealed to the princely order and the towns-people was annihilated by the same set of people. The social distance between the rulers and the ruled, the upper and the lower functional groups, between the princely order and the sons of the soil, remained at least as it was. It is sometimes alleged that in the Buddhist period, the middle class first emerged through the trade and industrial guilds. Probably true, but the blunt truth about the social processes of Indian culture is that Islam alone could offer a different outlook and a contrary set of values. Jainism had early become the religion of a peaceful community interested in business and welfare-schemes. Before Gandhiji revived its non-violence and

a certain influential section of Indian capitalists its altruism, Jainism was leading an apologetic existence as a religion. So Islam alone could give a shock. Its special outlook and traditions have been discussed later. Here we will only mention the fact of their newness. The fullness of the shock had no doubt been taken off by Buddhism. But for the Buddhist cushion, the Hindu society would have been shaken to its roots. Here was an important function of Buddhism in the evolution of Indian culture.

The contact between Buddhism and Islam had taken place outside India, in Iran, Iraq and in Balkh.[33] Out of numerous references, the following should suffice. In Balkh, the Buddhist temple, Navavihara (Nau-bahar), was managed by the Paramukha, the Priest. He was imprisoned and despatched to Khalif Uthman. Probably he was converted, and when he came back, the son was elected as the Paramukha. Later on, the Turco-Buddhist king murdered the family of the chief of Barmak. Only the wife escaped with her child to Kashmir. The child received a good education and went back to Balkh where he took charge of the temple. Harun-al-Rashid's prime minister was a Barmak and retained his interest in India. He invited Indian scholars to Baghdad and had a survey made of the Indian religious systems. The tradition of contact with Indian Buddhism continued throughout the Abbasid period. Magians were semi-Buddhists; Ata Ma'arri, the famous blind poet and one of the most enlightened men that Islamic culture has produced, was a 'veritable Buddhist'. Maulana Ziauddin, following von Kremer, has discovered many more traces of Buddhist ideologies in Islamic thought.

Nearer home, the contact between Islam and Buddhism was established very early through the twin channels of commerce and politics. The footprints of the Lord on the sacred peak in Ceylon were held by the Arabs to be those of Adam. The Prophet had said: "I

smell the sweet breeze of Allah's knowledge blowing from India," and his followers were quick to identify the Indians with the people of the Revealed Book. The Arab traders had spread themselves over Malabar, and the Western coast of India. Qasdar, Daibal, Broach, Cambay, Jaudaur, Sopara and Benares had domiciled Arabs as their citizens. The exchange of cultures went so far that one Hindu sect worshipped Ali as an avatar of Shiva. In Sind, the political factor was important. When the Muslims conquered it, the Buddhist rulers were fighting the Brahmins and not having the best of it. The Buddhist princes helped the Muslims to conquer Sind. Buzurg-bin-Shahriyar, who visited the Indian coast in the ninth century, says that the Buddhists "love the Muslims and are extremely well disposed towards them." He alludes to a deputation of two Bhikshus to Arabia in Umar's time. One of them came back and told the people of Ceylon how simply the Khalif lived. "That is why they have so much sympathy for the Muslims and are so much friendly with them." Maulana Ziauddin quotes Sulaiman the merchant's saying (a.d. 851): "There does not exist among rulers a prince who likes the Arabs more than Balhara, and his subjects follow his example." It was obvious that the Buddhist Sresthis easily found friends among the Arab traders and the Arab traders found the simple ethics and the humanism of Buddhism, at least Ceylonese Buddhism, more akin to the spirit of Islam. Brahmin cults were too deductive, too other-worldly, too socially exclusive for the Arab taste. Besides, the commercial middle class in the cities were either Buddhists or Jains, and never Brahmins. The best example of how Buddhism absorbed the shock of Islam and was itself absorbed in the process comes from Bengal. There the decadent and degraded Buddhists were converted *en masse* to Islam.

The Muslim saints of India took up the exchange where it was left by the Arab traders. From the ele-

venth century onward their line is continuous.[34] Here are a few great names with dates: Sheikh Ismail of Lahore (a.d. 1005), Nathar Shah of Trichinopoli (1020), Moinuddin Chisti of Ajmere (1195), Syed Jalaluddin of Sindh (1243), Sheikh Jalaluddin of Bengal (1244), Pir Mahabir of Bijapur (1350), Yusuf of Cutch (1350), Ali Hamdan of Kashmir (1388). From Sind to Sylhet, Panipat to Gulbarg, they spread in ever-widening circles. Moinuddin Chisti was responsible for the Hussaini Brahmins of Ajmere, that peculiar sect who fast equally during Ramdan (Ramzan) and Shivaratri, and feast equally on the Id and Ram-Navami, the males of whom wear Muslim dress while the females put on the vermilion mark. These Mian Thakurs have their counterparts in the Kakas and Samis of Gujerat. The descendants of the latter became of Khoja sect, and some take the Aga Khan as an incarnation of the Hindu triad, Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwar.

We have at last come to the great medieval mystics, Ramanand, Kabir, Dadu, Nanak, Laldas, Garibdas, Charandas, Leela Debi, Chaitanya, and a host of others with their respective 'panths'. Their spiritual technique as unearthed by Sri Kshitimohan Sen[35] is on all fours with that of the Sufis. The identification of the Sufi Fana with the Nirvana and the Maqamat with the Tantric 'chakras' is well established. We are, however, concerned with the impersonal contributions of the medieval saints a study of whose teachings reveals most interesting sociological features. Their large number at much about the same period would entitle us to include them in one broad movement which swept across the land. The undoubted enthusiasm which they created among the people would invest the movement with the spirit of a revolution into which individuals of the higher classes were occasionally drawn.[36] And then there was the unbroken series of their continuity which would demonstrate the regulated novelty of their doctrines. But

before we proceed to indicate their newness, a sketch of the socio-economic background is necessary.

The normal social conditions entailed a hierarchy in which the religious, juridical and economic functions combined in excellent carpentry. Thus the Brahmins were the preceptors and the supporters of the Kings and the Kshatriya chiefs. The latter were a feudal and military class collecting rents from villages and paying parts of them to the overlord who, in addition to the income from the Crown lands, took one-sixth to one-third of the produce of other lands, sometimes on the average, occasionally on the gross basis. In the villages dwelt the devout and the self-sufficient, who remained contented except during natural and human visitations. Under the Muslims the same dispensation continued even if occasional conversion by force took place.[37] Jagirs were well worth the Kalma if Paris was well worth a mass. The Brahmins, who kept the royal and courtly conscience, also kept the conscience of the villagers, with some compensation. They were the adjustable instrument that kept the balance between tradition and experiment by interpretations, Smritis as they are known. Gradually, however, the social distance between the Crown with his lords and the tenants and tillers of the soil increased. The social structure was strained by the end of the Pathan period, and a new system of ideas revolving round equality among the faithful was in the foreground. Conversion was usually peaceful and paying, compromise was in the air, and the Brahmins sought to make the system yet more elastic than what it had been under the stress of the Buddhist order. The Brahmins further relented and further stiffened; the feudal lords who had kept their jaigirs by conversion had to be tolerated, while humbler individuals were outcasted. Certain political changes took place in the relation between the centre and the subahs, and the pronounced regional characteristics developing into what

may now be called features of 'nationalities' threatened the all-India frame.[38] The counter-reformation had to come. When it did, it was sponsored by the Kings, the lords and the priests. But the lower castes and the Muslims proved intractable. The Lingayats and the Sikhs were tillers, just as the Jati-Vaishnavas of Bengal are mostly recruited from the Vaishyas and the Sudras, the shop-keepers, journey-men and craftsmen, even today. Lower down, the agriculturists had their own local variations of Buddhism, pre-Aryan cults and Islam. The Kabir, the Dadu, the Laldas, the Satnami, the Ram Sevi panthis would be called Sudras by the Hindu. The majority of the medieval saints in India were non-Brahmins when they were not non-Hindus like Kabir, Dadu, Rajjab. The closed ideational society with Brahmins closely co-operating with the nobility and royalty at the top was being pressed from the bottom. It had to yield before the united front of Islam, Buddhism and popular Hinduism, representing the common interests of the debarred. If India has few records of the prince siding with the people against the overlord or of the overlord taking up the cause of the people against their chief, it was mainly because of the absence of an organization like the Church among the Brahmins.[39] Being a loose organization, their influence over the social order was lasting through a series of cautious advances and retreats. Add to it the fact of economic self-sufficiency and placidity, and you get the secret of their continuous hold. The mystics challenged this shape of things. Perhaps their democratic strength was over-estimated, otherwise why did their doctrines become esoteric and their sects merge into the Hindu fold? But almost every struggle has been thus fought and thus lost with the neglect of the primal urges for change and conflict. So, within the social system of their work, the mystics were active revolutionaries, but not dynamic ones. Obviously, they could not be, because no basic upheaval of society had

occurred.

In the mean time, the mystics performed great deeds: they revolted against idolatry, the tyranny of caste and creed and the mechanics of ritualism, but along the submerged tradition of the dissenting Rishis of the Upanishads. They were opposed—some practised their opposition—to the barren asceticism of the Vedantist. They bridged the gulf between the communities, the Hindu and the Muslim, and made them one in faith, love and deeds. Their acts and sayings are the final answer to the communalists and the Imperialists of today. They abolished the purdah among their disciples and recognized women's rights to illumination. The Hindu woman, religiously, is a Sudra and is not entitled to the Gayatri mantram. Exceptions to the rule, e.g., the Brahmavadinis, were there, but their example need not suggest the ideal state of Indian womanhood inasmuch as the more vital ideals of motherhood and housewifery were always competing. Some of the mystic sects even permitted free selection of companions, separation, and widow-remarriage. Temples had no sanctity for them; the heart was the temple, and its keys were love and intuition. (Note the dialects of history: the present Harijan movement is immediately directed towards forcing the gates of the temple which the Harijan saints had always despised.) Priestcraft was sought to be avoided; it could have no place in a scheme of direct contact, unison, and intuitive comprehension. In the early stages, the head of the sect would often be selected by spiritual merit and rotation, irrespective of caste, creed, and sex; later on, he would be hereditary. An important result was the modification of the rigidity of Brahminical culture and the aridness of its logomachy. The heyday of mysticism marked the beginning of the end of theological scholarship. From many points of view, the mystics' was an anti-intellectual movement. Positively, they released the Indian spirit for a fresh

spurt of creative activity in the sphere of emotional disciplines.

Music was the first art to gain from the doctrine of love.[40] The Indian musical system had been divided into the Marga and the Deshi, and it was the latter that got the impetus. Chant became the recognized form of communal worship. A whole community of people religiously perfervid could not be expected to conform to the Shastric standards of accuracy and rules of exposition. Individually also, when music was the language of the soul in search of the beloved and hungry of direct contact with the Divine Person, any departure from the norm would be natural. Besides, the religious ardour would only make for songs and literary music. So, by the end of the fifteenth century a conference was called by a Gwalior prince to set matters right. From now on the pandits and their patrons would be busy writing new texts and commentaries on music. What is known today as classical Hindustani music was evolved from the counter-reformation that the saints and their sects had occasioned. Being a reaction it was deeply indebted to the community-music. Dhamar-Holi with its beautiful rhythm of swings, regional melodies, combinations between classical ragas and folk-airs, all were incorporated into the classical style and given high status. On the other hand, the folk-style also felt the effects of change. The Abhanga of Maharashtra and the Kirtan of Bengal were most affected. Krishna-Kirtan of Chandidas was probably originally sung in the simple Jhumur style; later on, it was highly stylized. By the end of the seventeenth century, the tide of the Bhakti cult began to turn, and saints became Avatars. The classical became the Darbari, the courtly and the manorial, while the Artha Sangit, i.e. music with meaning, with its insistence on the emotional and poetic value of words, remained laukik, i.e. the language of the people and the sects. It is interesting to note that the high and mighty Dhrupad,

the rigour of which has today driven it out of public favour, was only the other day a regional style of songs popular among women and common folk of which the words were to be in praise of a god or a king and the execution that of group chants.[41] A pandit from the South[42] listened to the court-musicians of the Badshah and lamented the good old days of music. The music of these centuries had to compromise with the newly aroused devotion. If it ultimately degenerated into hide-bound conventional exercises, with which we are familiar, it only repeated what the caste-system had done to the sects in the social sphere. Only, the history of Hindustani music illustrates better the combination of the Brahmin with the feudal aristocracy. The majority of the well-known scholars of music in this period were either princes or their Brahmin proteges.

The supreme contribution of the medieval mystics to Indian culture was in literature. It will be no exaggeration to say that the enrichment of dialects, some of which like Marathi, Hindi, Gujerati and Bengali[43] have since acquired the status of literature, was their doing. They had to approach the masses, and Sanskrit was the language of the gods and their favourites. A list of the more significant works in vernaculars would cover many pages. Tulsidas' Ramayana, Bhaktamal, Chaitanya-literature, and even the later Padavalis can compete with the world's best devotional literature. Literary activities were not concerned with original works alone, nor were they confined to the collecting of old pieces and sayings. Epics like the Mahabharata and the Ramayana were translated into Bengali. A comparative study of the character of Ram Chandra, Sita, Lakshman in the Sanskrit and the vernacular versions shows the influence of the Bhakti cult in full tide. The Chaitanya literature soon underwent a counter-change, however. Side by side with the vernacular version, the need was felt to publish Sanskrit works and commentaries. Rup

and Sanatan wrote in Sanskrit, Radhamohan Thakur explained the Bengali work, Padamrita Samudra, in Deva-bhasha. Apart from the much wider popularity of Sanskrit than now, this was in consonance with the gradual conversion of Chaitanya into an Avatar and the final acceptance of his identification with Krishna. His cult had to acquire prestige with the Brahmin and come to terms with the traditional, sophisticated culture.

The same story of a revolutionary outburst and final surrender to orthodoxy is repeated in Painting and Architecture.[44] What can best be described as Rajasthani School, with the Jammu, Kangra, Garhwali and Sikh varieties as subjects, is not understandable without initiation in the mysteries of Krishna-Lila. The Ras-Lila series is the most important, and next in aesthetic order comes the Ragmala series.[45] The entire Rajasthani group is a move away from the court-art of the Mughals. The latter had become mechanical in the repetition of its few motifs. It was 'academic, dramatic, objective, and eclectic'. Prince Danyal even was weary. The Rajasthani school supplied what it lacked, the poetic background. The poetry was lyrical, devotional and erotic by turn. In fine, it reflected the literary moods which were being formulated by the Hindi writers. On the top and in the back of the Ragmala pictures are to be found Hindi couplets depicting all the moods of 'Nayikas'.[46] This subservience of Rajasthani painting to literature and its connexion with music and erotics clearly show its limitations in '*maelerisch*' qualities. Nevertheless, in its best days, it did establish a contact with the life of the masses, saturated as it was in the familiar epics and the popular mysticism of the Krishna Cult.

This contact also became precarious. As in literature the emotion of love was classified into moods and ultimately stereotyped, the relation between lovers in the subject-matter of the pictures was also unduly con-

ventionalized. A whole treatise, Rasikapriya, was written by Kesav Das of Bundelkhand (about 1591) to typify the lovers on the basis of predicaments and attitudes. Dut-Sandhana-rasa (the flavour of love hard to reconcile), Vichitra Vibhram-Praudha (an experienced lover stricken), Navabala (inexperienced girl), Guna-Garvita (proud), Vipralabdha (disappointed lover), Khandita (petulant), Kalahantarita (separated by quarrel), Virahini (separated bride), Agata-pathika (lover returned), they are all there—neatly arranged, subtly distinguished, and scrupulously followed in literary and pictorial treatments. No wonder that painting became static, stylized and aristocratic. The quality itself deteriorated, as is evident from a glance at the later specimens of the Kangra variety. The Rajasthani painting in course of time shed its freshness, its mass-affiliations, its lively colours and above all, its genuinely human appeal. By the end of the nineteenth century it died a natural death.

Architecture, though the earliest of arts, is probably the slowest to move. Yet it did move.[47] In this period, there was considerable architectural activity in Hindu as well as in Muslim principalities. In Bengal, the Vishnupura style was stimulated by the conversion of its low-caste rulers into Chaitanyism. Being strategically situated in the way of Muslim expansion to the South from the Bengal outpost, this principality gained in political importance. Culturally, it came under the influence of Vaishnavism. Extensive building operations in bricks were carried on from the middle of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth.[48] (It also became a centre of Hindustani music. Its neighbourhood is still well known for Kirtan.) In the North, Brindaban was colonized by Bengali saints and scholars, and it soon became an important seat of Chaitanyism. The famous temple of Jugal Kishore was a work of great beauty. The group of Jaina temples at Sonagarh in

Bundelkhand was continued through the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. The Golden Temple of the Sikhs at Amritsar took its final shape by 1766 after many vicissitudes. The noblest achievement in stone of this period was, however, the civic architecture in Central India, Rajputana and Bundelkhand. The Gwalior (sixteenth century), Datia, Orchha, Amber and Jodhpur (seventeenth), Jagnibas (seventeenth—eighteenth) palaces are unique creations of their kind. The ghats on the Ganges and the Narbudda are another illustration of the civic art. In the South, the Vijayanagar and Madura styles were the last crop of Hindu Art. The former city under Krishna Dev Raya (1509-1529) and Achyuta Raya reached the height of magnificence; Saiva, Vaisnava and Jaina styles were equally patronised by them. At Madura, Tirumal Nayak (1623-1639) was a great builder. In Tanjore as well the architectural activity was brisk. The Hindu artist's supreme effort, viz. the Nataraja, became very popular in the Chola period. The palaces of the Southern princes were much inferior to those of the North. If, however, one compares the Madura temple with Bhuvaneshwar or Mukteswar of Orissa or Sonagarh or Khajurgaon, the gradual deterioration of the creative spirit is at once detected. Nothing could be more heavy and choking than the Madura 'gopuram', nothing more mechanically repetitive than its motifs. It is quantity run amuck. Madura alone could illustrate the thesis that the direct influence of the mystics was over. The creative impulse that had been liberated by them seemed to have been blocked completely and irrevocably by traditionalism. The Shilpa Shastra had triumphed.

We have come as far as the middle of the eighteenth century. The impact of the Muslim rule also was no longer an effective agency for Indian culture. It could not be so as Muslim rule was never all-pervasive like economic Imperialism. Numerous still were the Muslim

traders, chiefly Arab, operating on the High Seas and with bases in Indian ports. But they belonged to an older age. A new order was dawning. The commercial adventurers had come, and out of their conflict with the remnants of the Mughal rule the British rule emerged. The novelty of this administration requires more than a passing attention. The Muslim rule was a military occupation of the cities mainly. Its influence was felt through marauding exploits, military tributes and fines, revenue-farming, chiefly by Hindu Zamindars, and through occasional forced conversions. The background of Indian society remained Hindu. Economically, commercial and trading interests were the dominant and the potentially progressive groups. In fine, the middle classes were playing their role,[49] though from the point of view of distribution of wealth there were 'giddy heights and dizzy depths'. The village panchayat pursued the smooth duties of rural administration. The caste-system stiffened itself against conversion and contamination from outside sources. Education was fairly well spread, in spite of some fanatical destruction of texts in temples and palaces. Villagers, as usual, were concerned with their land which had not yet been deprived of its life-giving floods by transport facilities. Peasant proprietorship was the rule, although big zamindaris had been firmly established. The Muslim rulers did not go back to Turkistan or to Afghanistan after serving India for a statutory period. In this context, true acculturization could and did take place.[50] The bed of Indian culture remained what it was, only the stream was fuller and richer. The religious outbursts of this period were genuine attempts at synthesis. If they failed, they failed after a fair trial, when either the strength of the foreign impact diminished or when the Indian society absorbed the new and made it its own. The mystic revolution, in the absence of a fundamental change of the Indian social economy, was bound to be

a mirror-revolution. But by the British rule the very basis of the Indian social economy has been changed. The indigeneous middle class interests in trade and commerce were first supplanted by British agencies and middlemen. Indians were compelled to become land-minded by revenue policies. They were given education, the chief purpose of which was to create a host of lower-class clerks and officials. The panchayat system was shaken by successive instalments of village self-government. The transport system, inaugurated for the dual purpose of defence and foreign trade, tampered with the physical geography of India.[51] In short, the British rule has been more intimate than the Muslim rule inasmuch as it has given India an alternative to her native systems. The Muslims just reigned, but seldom ruled. They offered no alternatives, no better way of self-government. Except when the capitation-tax was harshly levied, the old middle class of traders and commercial capitalists continued to exercise their liberating functions in the Muslim period. One concrete result of the intimacy of British rule, however, has been the emergence of a spurious middle class—the 'bhadraloks' who do not play any truly historical part in the socio-economic evolution of the country, remain distant from the rest of the people in professional isolation or as rent receivers, and are divorced from the realities of social and economical life. Their loyalties to Indian culture vary from rectitude to reform. Very few of them are social revolutionaries, even as the medieval mystics were. The strangeness of their reformism consists in their ideological progressiveness and their practical conformity. Their ignorance of the background of Indian culture is profound. The character of the Hindu revival or of Anglo-Indian culture is conditioned by the unrootedness of this new elite, their increasing social distance from the rest of the community, and the consequent unreality of their position. Their pride in culture

is in inverse proportion to its lack of social content.

It has been claimed that the race of mystics is not yet finished. So far as Bengal is concerned—and the rest of India thinks that Bengal is the home of saints—mystics have continued to exist. Until a few years ago each district had at least one. The number is now dwindling, probably because political mysticism is growing and Gresham's Law is operating. Still mystics and their cults exist. An important point about them is the professional class of their disciples. The educated and the disappointed among the 'bhadralok' join their ranks. Yet there has been no religious leader of note who has reached the masses, say as Chaitanya, Kabir and Dadu did. The Brahmo-Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, all of them catered for the upper classes. The same with Theosophy. Let us take the Brahmo Samaj. Without going into details, it may be said that this movement passed through three important stages. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was, of course, the founder. But he was no mystic; his mission was prophetic. (This distinction is a typical product of modern culture in India.) He has been credited with the performance of the stupendous task of creating modern India.[52] He had a big mind, large vision, and was more free than his contemporaries from the trammels of tradition. A protestant though he was, he did not want to launch a novel religion or society. Sociologically speaking, his contribution did not consist in helping the older order to take the next step in which forces within the old society would register their evolution. Rather did it consist in giving shape to the circumstances which were created by the blocking of the natural process by British pressure. Through his efforts the new middle class acquired self-confidence and a status within the ambit of the foreign rule. In other words, he converted necessity into a virtue. Intellectually, the Rajah was a giant, but he did not notice that the new middle class, even with European educa-

tion, without prejudices and superstitions, gifted with a cosmopolitan attitude and blessed with a fair dose of social freedom, could never be a substitute for the genuine middle class that would have arisen on the decay of the feudal system and the unhampered growth of industrialism, as for example, in the way that it did arise in England from the middle of the eighteenth century and flower in all the grandeur and limitations of the Victorian age. Today, we are fully conscious of the deficiency of the Victorian period in England. Yet, on the whole, its achievements are superior to those of ours. There was an unconscious realization of the above fact by the people themselves: Bankim was not compared with his contemporary Dickens, nor were Michael M. S. Dutt, Hem Chandra, or Nabin Sen to Tennyson or Browning; they were Scott and Byron and Milton of the previous age; even Tagore was the Indian Shelley. And Indian Liberal politicians were imitations of Bright and Gladstone.

Maharshi Devendra Nath offered the theology of the Brahmo movement in its second phase. Inasmuch as it was based upon the Upanishads, the study of which had retired into the background, it was refreshingly orthodox. Neither was the departure from it in the way of rejection or dissent anything else. The whole work of these two leaders was frustrated by the fact that they had no position in the social structure. The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, which was consolidated after Kesab Chandra Sen's secession, was a reaction of the middle class against the latter's aristocratic connexions. The Nababidhan's Kirtan could not bridge the widening gulf. The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj suffered severely when one of its preachers, Vijay Krishna, became a great Vaishnavite. Since then, the Brahmo group has been in the process of being absorbed by the Hindu society. While the exclusiveness of the former has been broken, the range and mobility of the middle class of the latter

have increased. The social meaning of this absorption is the extension of the middle class, and not the victory of traditions as in the earlier cases. So, there has been some social gain. From such a point of view, the Brahmo movement is typical of similar movements in other provinces.[53]

A reaction to this, plus the spread of humanism of the atheistic type, the conversion of a few intellectuals to Christianity, and the dawning sense of disillusionment of the professional middle class led to counter-reformation. The Vaishnavite revival, the Theosophical movement, and the recrudescence of reformist Brahminism were different aspects of the counter-reformation. It was, of course, on the ideological plane. The educated were being weaned away from the Indian inheritance, and it was necessary to stop the rot. Naturally, the Hindu reaction carried some of the absurdities of the occasion for the reaction. In this period, more claims were made for Hindu philosophy and Hindu customs than even the Rishis dared. Western Science was contemptuously referred to in the lectures in the halls of Theosophy. Sometimes, the reaction was a bit tainted by political considerations or by personal disillusionment. The number of retired government officials and professional men in the new ranks of the religious was large indeed. One distinction is to be made here. The religiosity of this group was not the religious self-complacency of the English *bourgeoisie,* nor of the new millionaire who keeps Gurus in the same spirit as he keeps race-horses and mistresses, and whose emotive springs are the feeling of deprivation and the consequent bitterness, crude exploitation and the shame of it. The older group had more honest religious convictions. Death has recently paid high dividends to the Hindu, high-souled, religious, benevolent war-profiteers in Bengal.

Paramahansa Sri Ramakrishna is a curious exception

to this Anglo-Indian religiosity. He was in the classic line of the mystics. No petulant aversion from Western materialism, no sophisticated defence on rationalistic grounds, no intellectual pride of heritage ever dictated his spirituality. In him no snobbish attempts at equality with the powerful nations of the West by fictitious claims for spiritual superiority, no dissent *qua* dissent, no re-hash of Comte, Mill and Hamilton, no loss of breath in trying to keep pace with the progress of the world, but just the undefiled source and the clear vision of an illiterate priest, crude, raw, unmodern and the commonest of the common. He came from the people, he smelt of the earth, and he talked like the peasant, with the shrewdness and directness of homely rustic metaphors. And Paramahansa was a rebel, as Kabir and Rajjab were. He had passed through all types of disciplines, Vaishnava, Shakta and Vedanta, Islamic, Buddhist and Christian alike. Yet no Brahmin could outcaste him, though some tried. He respected women, in the only way open to Indians, by calling them 'mother' and avoiding them. He would not perform the daily rituals. He would allow non-Brahmins to be initiated. His toleration was so great that it was misunderstood as an attempt at the final religious synthesis. The old tradition was revived in him, and thus refreshed.

Yet, and this is the tragedy of the situation, with all the help of the dynamic personality of Swami Vivekananda, Paramahansa Deb's influence has not succeeded in shaking our social foundations. A number of people have been inspired, no doubt, but the masses have not trembled in their sleep. Natural, very natural, indeed, in the light of our thesis, because those who were inspired had nothing to do with the life of the people. They absorbed the shock and converted the release into humanitarianism. Even in that conversion a golden opportunity was lost. Being based upon religion and true to Indian traditions, Swami Vivekananda's love of

humanity was certainly more genuine and appropriate than either the positivistic humanism of Comte's disciples or the *bourgeois* love of humanity that demonstrates itself in charities and such other undertakings which bring knighthoods, Rài Bahadurships, or national honour. Today, the wonderful institutions under the Ramkrishna-Vivekananda Missions are the object of universal admiration. But they are not informed by the historical sense. In the three volumes of the *Indian Cultural Heritage* published by them as the Ramkrishna Centenary Volumes, there is no mention of the future of our culture. A sense of the past is only an exercise in memory.

One is not sure, when Sri Aurobindo and the Mahatma are still living, whether the days of the mystics are over or not. But the mystics from our point of view have been important only as makers of social change. Gandhiji has stirred the life of the masses. His work is that of a stimulant. The method, however, is not through genuine mysticism. He believes in God, lives like a saint, has a creed of non-violence and a faith. But the economic and political factors are probably more important in the make-up of his influence than the purely mystic strain. For the masses, his symbolism is more significant than his realities. Sri Aurobindo's influence on the people as a whole is not yet apparent.

The present position of mysticism as an agency of social change is a hopeless one. No mystic of today can be so effective as his predecessors. Under the British rule, the Indian society is no longer ideational in the true sense of the term. If it still retains a religious ideology it is because of inertia or culture-lag. The reasons why political, economic and social movements still owe allegiance to religious ideas are: (i) the peculiar position of the middle class which feels a sense of denial and disillusionment. (As will be apparent, later on, this feeling in its turn is due to the blocking of the natural

economical evolution by foreign economic interests.) (ii) The insufficiency of any other indigenous substitute for the older culture except nationalism which, therefore, must needs bear the strain of adjustment to new situations and fill the void. Our culture today is thus a mechanical mixture of two incompatible elements. Hence it is not stable. The large number of great men that it has thrown up is more like the series of explosions which an unstable chemical compound makes than the marked stages in the growth of an organism. The Indian mysticism of the twentieth century has not percolated through the outer rinds of the Indian society. Thus also is it that recent Indian contributions to philosophy are mainly historical and usually couched in Western terms, and that the Indian Youth betrays stupendous ignorance of Indian culture and a very healthy aversion from the advertized virtues of the Idealism of Indian philosophy.

CHAPTER II

CULTURAL UNITY AND SOCIAL PROCESSES

If Indian culture is there with the outlook that had been 'religiously' conditioned so long, the question that next arises is in regard to the texture of that culture. Is it a mosaic or a motley, a synthesis or an artifice? Some people think that the solution of practically all Indian problems depends upon the answer to that question. We also submit that certain political demands can be best understood in terms of sociological principles.

About thirty years ago, Prof. Radhakumud Mookerji wrote a book called *The Fundamental Unity of India.* It created a sensation and was extensively quoted by Indians and non-Indians alike. The importance of his thesis consisted in crystallizing what many Indians had begun to feel in reaction against the subtle insinuations and the often overt statements by interested people about India being a congeries of many languages, habits and cultures. Prof. Mookerji emphasized the cultural unity of Hindu India, referred to the notion of a single, undivided Bharat-Varsha in one of the great odes of all times, and pointed out that pilgrimages to the extreme corners of this continent brought its diverse peoples into physical and mental contact in an age when communications were difficult. The use of Sanskrit on all ceremonial occasions—and their number was legion and hold all-pervading—made for cultural homogeneity. These ideas became the stock-in-trade of subsequent intellectuals in India. Be it noted that the Muslim contribution had no place in the above thesis. But then the Communal Award came mainly at the instance of a few friends of India, and the sense of Indian unity was

further aroused. In reaction, Prof. Mookerji devoted much time and learning to the solution of the problem of minorities on the model offered by the League of Nations. The model solution in its turn led to this war and the Professor recommended cultural autonomy for the minorities in language and religion. Later, recent events make it compulsory, even for those who lead a sheltered existence, to analyse further this problem of Indian unity in culture.

Behind the statement that India has a unity is the view of history as a 'record' of events and achievements. The refinement of such a view is known as 'scientific history', i.e. the application of the scientific view to honestly accumulated and observed data so that no conclusion which the data will not bear may be ventured. Now, nearly all the known facts—nearly, because the writer is not unaware of the incidents of Hindu-Muslim struggle and of mutual atrocities in pre-British India[1]—drive towards the grand total of give and take, assimilation, co-operation, in other words, towards Indian 'unity.' 'Historical' conscience should make a coward of a Muslim League politician if he chooses to assert otherwise.

But history has acquired a different meaning, of late. Not that the scientific approach has been discarded, but science in regard to human and social behaviour has been charged with a new significance. Take Croce's idea of History as an unfolding of the spirit, at one end, or Marx's as the play of dialectical materialism, at the other, or if you reject both and accept Toynbee's middle thesis of history as a series of challenges and responses, history becomes a study of dynamic social processes. It is no longer the camera-study of a cross-section withdrawn and immobilized out of life's circulation by pseudo-intellectual detachment, aversion from commitments or mere convenience. Nor is it a cinematic progression of isolated incidents simu-

lating integrated movement for the fleeting hours of academic entertainment. The substance of history today is the organic social life that posits interdependence of parts, and simultaneously, a growth, a process, a continuity which assumes that the organism never stays or dies, but changes forms, and ascends or descends into higher or lower levels. The scientific method applicable to such a content, which is a process, cannot, for obvious reasons, be equated either to the laws of mechanics or to the physico-chemical treatment by which causation must not transgress the set sequence or relations and explanation must needs be tautological. Human wills intervene, and they are intractable, excepting in their mass and in their tendencies. Once we come to human actions in their mass tendencies, the content of history becomes a more total organism comprising different types of environment and of the life of the people in their habits, folk-ways, customs and occupations, and comprehending the facts and possibilities of development. The analysis involved in this new method and conception of history eagerly seeks to discover laws or generalizations beneath the mass-tendencies, with a view to *remake* history. In fine, the problem today for the historian is to take up the more or less continuous social *processes* in Indian history, and not to limit himself to the so-called *facts* of Indian unity in order that new history may be made. These processes may be studied in strands of traditions or in their cross-sections of 'residues' and 'derivatives'. Another way of putting it is to urge the adoption of the sociological approach. The writer is sure that politicians will profit by it. Indian history is a running concern. The real value of the statement is in the suffix 'ing'. Nation-builders can use it then as a gerund which we know to be a verbal noun.

Sociologically speaking,[2] consciousness of kind, which is the psychological base of unity, acquires conti-

nuity mainly through social memory, i.e. traditions, a convenient classification of which has been made by Giddings into the primary, the secondary and the tertiary, in accordance with degrees of tangibility. The primary group consists of modes of utilization of natural and mechanical resources, the traditions of social and manners and common law, and the political ones of juridical behaviour that centre in codes of toleration, super- and sub-ordination, i.e. homage and alliance. Coming into a more intangible world we meet with the personal, the aesthetic and the religious traditions. Mostly, they are the echoes or the epi-phenomena[3] of the primary group of which the modes of utilization, i.e. of livelihood, are the dominant ones. The tertiary traditions are records of conceptual thought and relate to the still more intangible world of theology, metaphysics and the pure sciences. It is obvious that all these types of traditions are not common to all the communities of India. The tempo or the rate of their growth has also not been uniform. When the types have met, the rate is fast; when they have pulled in different directions in unequal strength, the tempo has been held up. And yet, the process has not ceased, as the following analysis should show. It is confined to the traditions of the two major communities.

By and large, there are more agreements between the Hindu and the Muslim traditions, as developed in India, in the primary group than in the secondary and the tertiary. Modes of utilization of Nature's resources, including the general non--exploitation of mechanical power, make the Hindu and the Muslim workers alike. Whatever different shades may exist in the relative customs of cultivation among the Hindu and the Muslim tillers, they are less than those that exist within the Hindu fold itself.[4] The preferences for a particular category of work inside a factory[5] are mainly functional. In regard to traditions of social toleration, the Hindu

opinion is that Muslims as a people are fanatics, vide the religious murders and the idea of shaheed; and the Muslim opinion is that the Hindus are intolerant, vide the untouchables. But a sociologist would venture to submit that the differences as are betrayed by the caste-system, on the one hand, and the egalitarian habits, on the other, or say, in the allowances given to heretics and the fanatical hatred meted out to the critics, are actually overridden by three sets of social forces. First comes the process of assimilation. Anybody who doubts it should study the manners of the two ruling castes among the Hindus in the U.P., viz. the Kayasthas and the Kashmiri Brahmins who in their dress, food, etiquette, language, even in some of their intimate customs, are almost as Islamic as any Muslim. It is a pleasure to watch a Kashmiri Pandit or a Kayastha clerk correcting a Muslim's Urdu in Lucknow. Then there are the principles of common law and criminal jurisprudence as they have been operating for about a century. Their unifying influence has not received an adequate share of recognition. We may add the revenue administration and all that it means in shaping the life of the people in the countryside. Lastly, one would submit the most important feature of social economy in India, viz. the nature of social obligations which form the very base of our conduct, manners, social codes, of all our juridical behaviour, in short, of toleration, in the sociological sense of the term. In India, whatever may be the reason[6] and the processes, the doctrine of responsibility[7] has been more developed than that of rights. Very few of the Hindu and Muslim rights are absolute; they are all limited by conditions imposed upon their due exercise. By obligations, the social ones are referred to, and of them, the familial are the central. Here all communities meet. Thus, for example, the 'Karta' of a Hindu joint family has a duty to perform by his relations connected with him by 'spiritual benefit'; and the head of

the Muslim family does likewise by his relations; only the circle is smaller, its periphery being determined by marriage restrictions.[8] In India, except probably among the educated upper classes, the head of the family simply cannot afford to permit his relatives to go their own way and earn their livelihood. Other instances will easily occur, e.g. philanthropy or charity, life in the villages, caste or sectarian feeling, even nepotism, in fact, all those traits that prevent us from being 'civilized' individuals. If other countries[9] on the same economic level betray these symptoms of our obliging nature, they do not affect the argument. They only strengthen the sociological interpretation.

The third set of primary traditions relates to homage, allegiance and alliance. The word 'ordination'[10] is better, as with the addition of the prefixes 'super', 'co', and 'sub' the emotional associations of the word 'homage' can be got rid of. There is next to nothing in the corpus of Hindu political traditions (not merely texts)[11] that lays down a clear rule of behaviour *against* political homage *as such*. The Hindus did not develop any theory of political resistance, they have simply obeyed, while their lawgivers from Jaimini to Madhvacharya have gone on warning the kings against reckless rule. In Islam, there is one, in the Dar-ul-Harab conception, for example, though the Aligarh movement and the consequential search for employment proved to be levellers of subtleties and founders of new habits of homage. The Hindu tradition of 'ordination' is very strong in the social sphere. Alliance between small groups has been converted into allegiance, and allegiance into homage to the two upper castes. It is shocking but true that there are no living Hindu traditions of alliance between large groups, and that only those of super– and sub-ordination exist in the scheme of social hierarchy known as the caste-system. Assimilation there has been; in fact, it is still going on within the limited elastic boundaries of the

caste-system;[12] but the governing principle of functional relegation at birth has not been overcome because of the slow rate of industrialization and the absence of any desired standard of progressive living. Guruvad in the personal sphere of religion is favourable to the 'super' and 'sub' relation, even if we exclude the longer period of Hindu subjection and Hindu feudalism. Among the Muslims, traditions of alliance, assimilation and allegiance exist and operate through the concept of 'brethren in faith'. So the third batch of primary traditions betrays some dissimilarity.

Recently, however, the rise of the *bourgeoisie* among both communities, the general influence of the West, and a wide sense of ineffectiveness seem to be extinguishing the differences. None of these factors has, however, gone beneath the surface. A subject people is all surface; its emotions cannot be deep, nor can influences easily penetrate below the rind and the husk. That is a stern fact, and a sociologist can only take it or leave it. Of the three factors making for unity in the midst of diversity in the above section of primary traditions, the widely prevalent sense of frustration is the most intriguing today. It has bred a fondness for homage to exceptional men or leaders. The hold of 'dictators' in the respective political organizations of the two communities is very much before our eyes. The hold is not similar in the two cases, and the ideas of homage and allegiance are not qualitatively the same.[13] Thus, for example, Gandhiji's hold on the Congress is of a semi-religious character and partly divorced from power, whereas Mr Jinnah's is purely political, *pace* his recent adoption of typically Muslim dress on Muslim occasions. Thus again, the influence of religious divines upon the politics of the Muslims appears to be dwindling, whereas that of the Swamis upon Hindu politics is increasing. Even in the Congress, which is most certainly a national organization, ascetics have yet a long course to run. Silk in

the Congress pandal is an impossibility, silk on the League platform is the order of the day. Silk or no silk, 'dictators' are building up a new, common tradition of super– and sub-ordination in India. Between these stones of the mill, co-ordination is likely to get crushed.

It is, however, not unlikely that diversity has a chance to lose its edge in the process of a new conflict. In fact, that is the sociological counterpart of the essential nationalist position that the two communities should be equally anti-Imperialist. But it is not so simple as it looks. The Hindus bear the burden of a double conflict, the one vis-a-vis the British, the other vis-a-vis the Muslims. The latter, however, have one conflict in view, viz. with the Hindus whom they equate with the Congress. There is yet a third conflict for the Hindus, viz. with their own heavy traditions. The Muslims in India travel light; which explains why their young men can oftener go to the logical extreme, say Communism. If we leave this, the double conflict divides the energy of the Hindus, whereas the single conflict forges the Muslims into a spearhead for attack. It is not even hinted that there are no nationalist, anti-Imperialist elements among the Muslims. They are there, and they are the salt of the earth. The contention is that, for the time being, the suspicion of the organized section of the Muslim community against the Hindus is greater than its mistrust of the political rulers, and that it stands in the way of constructing common primary traditions of alliance and allegiance. It is all a matter of more or less. So suspicion leads us to the study of 'derivations' and 'sentiments'. But before we do so, the secondary and the tertiary traditions should be analysed.

The degree of tangibility, which is a common-sense test, distinguishes the primary traditions from the secondary and the tertiary. The secondary traditions have been conveniently divided into the animistic, the aesthetic and the religious. Within the animistic are

included the totemistic and magical beliefs and practices by which animate and inanimate objects are invested with certain powers. On a higher level of the same set, one finds beliefs about substance or soul or self, its permanence and impermanence, singularity and plurality, and ultimately, its destiny. The aesthetic traditions start with the assumption of and faith in notes, images and words as independent entities acting on behalf of wider invisible forms and powers. Magicians who later on bloom into artists can invoke them by proper treatment in the interests or otherwise of the community or certain sections of it. In the last stage, artists utilize them as modes of personal expression after the necessary identification and annexation. Religious traditions are usually mixed up with the first two. They also proceed from hosts to gods, ending in one all-kind or all-powerful, but an all-pervading God or spirit. Most of these traditions are vague and, therefore, have ample room for development and adjustment with contrary beliefs. But, and this is the important point, they harden into units or into constellations when conflict has arisen in the primary group, particularly in the set that revolves round utilization of resources, i.e. the productive system. The significance of the above is twofold.[14] (i) No conflict in the secondary traditions can be resolved without a reference to the first, and (ii) conversely, the conflict in the first takes the form of conflict in the second and in the third. This process is either of attenuation or of reinforcement. History is littered with instances of struggles between prophets and gods corresponding to struggles between principalities, e.g. in Egypt, Judea, China, India, and between classes, e.g. in early Christianity in Rome, and in the Shia-Sunni disputes in Iran. The following quotations from one of the greatest authorities on Mussalman culture, V. V. Bartold,[15] may be interesting to the Indian reader: "Here, too, the popular masses gave up the religion of Zarathustra and

adopted Shiism, the spread of which was connected with the destruction of the feudal system and large landed properties. The struggle against the Caliphate and orthodox Islam was accompanied by agrarian revolts. As in Europe, the princes sought support among the masses and helped to raise the 'workers on land' against the 'owners of land' who were supposed to be the allies of the Arabs." Not only that, but the later conflict between the two Sunni sects, the Hanifis and the Shafiits, can also be traced to the struggle in the primary group. "The greater part of the agricultural population upheld the cause of the Shiits whereas the majority of the townspeople belonged to the Hanifis and the minority to the Shafiits. . ." who, as we know, still managed to overcome them at Rei. Bartold who, by the way, is not a Communist,[15] thus concludes: "It would seem that under the guise of religion the real fight that was taking place was between the town and the village, between the aristocratic and the democratic elements of the town population." Of course, the connexion between competition or struggle in the primary and the secondary groups is statistical, the very nature of the subject matter being group- or mass-tendencies. Sometimes, as Marx pointed out in a note on Greek myths,[16] when art is highly developed there is no direct connexion with the material basis and the skeleton structure of its organization. Usually, it is one of correlated variation.[17]

Now, it will be generally conceded that the corpus of Hindu traditions has a greater number of animistic, totemistic and magical vestiges than the Islamic. This has affected the political and the social traditions as badly as the economic ones with the result that the average Hindu's political attitude is very often governed by totems and taboos and his aspirations by magic. The habit of waiting for a miracle to make the tide of events turn in his or India's favour is decidedly more Hindu than Muslim. The Mahatma is, of course, the miracle-

man, the magician, the spell-binder, the charmer. There are political families and groups in every province in India which are almost totemistic tribes. In contrast with the magical, the Muslim attitude in politics looks logical, tangible, very nearly of the earth, earthy. The difference in the secondary group of traditions does not easily make for mutual understanding and compromise, even when it does not support the two-nation theory.

The aesthetic group is like Unity Conferences where communities embrace each other and drown their differences in rivers of goodwill. The Islamic injunctions, as certain Indian Muslims have interpreted them, have not stood in the way of contributions by Muslims to Indian painting[18] and music. The give and take has led to an extraordinary synthesis in Indian art. Whatever certain scholars in Madras and Bombay may say to the contrary, some of our magnificent melodic structures[19] are the gifts of the Muslims just as some first-class portraits are by Muslim painters. The late Nazir-uddin Khan's (of Indore) exposition of the Sanskrit slokas in which the spirit of the Ragas is described should have given the quietus to the communal interpretation of Indian culture. Religious ecstasy among Hindu listeners has been as often aroused by Muslim singers singing Bhajan, Pad, Holi and other varieties of religious music as by those who have a lien on them by virtue of birth and traditions. For the Muslim as well as for the Hindu artist, notes and colours have the same potency. One wishes that the same could be said about words as used in literature. Yet the modern experiments in Sanskritic Hindi and Persianized Urdu have not yet succeeded in making new words strike their roots deep into the bowels of the collective Unconscious. This is the opportunity for Hindustani, though its spread has not yet been sociologically conducted.

Religious traditions separate the two communities most. Here we are referring not to practices and rituals

but to the character of beliefs. The significant heads of differences are enumerated below: (i) Community of faith as distinguished from kinship by blood. (ii) The emphasis on the prophetic rather than on the mystic, and on the worldly-human rather than on the ascetic. (iii) The finality of the institution of prophethood. (iv) A more intimate hold of religion upon jurisprudence[20] and principles of institutions. The reason for mentioning the Islamic features and leaving the Hindu characteristics to inference springs from the greater facility and the deeper responsibility of the Hindus, on the score of their being the majority, to understand such challenging questions.

Right from the Medina Charter of Hijrah I, one of the greatest documents in world-history, faith in Allah and the Prophet's mission, with the concomitant adherence to the Precepts, has been the basic bond of the Islamic community. The appeal to the deepest instincts of worship no less than to the tribal feeling was the earliest cohesive force which was later reinforced by the Semitic belief in being the chosen and the holy "to whom is entrusted the furtherance of good and the repression of evil." Conflict and the need for co-ordination shaped the community as "one hand against all others", "brethren in faith, partners in the sharing of booty, allies against the common foe" who was the non-believer. This idea of the "single hand", of the "compact wall whose bricks support each other" is implicit in every aspect of Islamic law. The connotations of this tradition are very large. One is equality of the faithful among themselves; and another, very relevant to our subject, is the extra-territorial allegiance of the Islamic peoples. Recently, however, a wave of nationalism has swept over them, but a vague notion of Pan-Islam always breathes on it. Mr Fazlul Huq's whipping up of local Bengali patriotism did not produce any tangible result in minimizing the influence of non-Bengali Muslims in local politics, eco-

nomics and riots. Similarly, Sir Sikandar's understanding of the Punjab problem only gave him the latitude of the Prodigal Son. Against this communitarianism, the Hindus can offer the family or the caste tie, all variants of the blood tie. Hindu and Muslim nepotism can be similarly distinguished; the weaker allegiance of the Muslims to the concept of Bharat-Mata[21] can also be thus partly explained. The failure of the Khilafat movement in India and its subsequent reactions and repercussions could again be traced to this source of difference in the religious traditions.

Prophet, mystic, ascetic—they are types in the history of personality. When unitary experience is sufficient unto itself and nothing else is comparable to its joy, it makes up the mystic. The prophet redirects the overflowing experience for reshaping social life, and goes to the springs and roots to sprout and fruit. The ascetic, on the other hand, is keen on saving energy to get the most out of the experience of unity.[22] All systems of religion contain and provide for the three personality-types, but due to objective situations, one type becomes dominant in one religion and another type in another. Islamic mysticism is as deep and beautiful, and a Muslim ascetic may be as rigorous as the Hindu.[23] The two systems have affected each other, as we all know.[24] Yet, the appeal of the mystic-cum-ascetic is to the Hindu and of the prophet is to the Muslim. Proofs galore can be adduced, but one may be selected from the sphere of political attitudes. About the Hindu respect for political leaders, it may be said that its strength often depends inversely upon the length of the loin-cloth, and directly upon the vagueness of its vision and reports of 'sacrifice' ranging from that of fabulous incomes to the smiling welcome of the inconveniences of prison life. On the other hand, the Muslim respect is based upon more concrete things, e.g. dress and dinner, effectiveness in achieving cohesion, and action. The theoretical subtle-

ties of non-violence[25] are inconceivable in Muslim politics. One 'reason' may be that Mr Jinnah cannot contradict himself, but the true one is that his political integrity has been hammered by action, which is the prophetic element in him. This does not mean that he does not think; of course, he can. Only, he is more interested in action and reaction, recently, more in the latter than in the former. His prophetic pragmatism has been an invaluable asset to his leadership and the political effectiveness of his community. In this, he and his party are fairly up to date in spite of their political claim *qua* Muslims.

In the above paragraph, the words 'prophet' and 'prophetic' have been used as types of personality and experience. But the specificity of Islamic religious belief lies in the 'finality of the institution of prophethood.' On this point we would rather quote Iqbal from his brilliant lecture on the Spirit of Muslim Culture: "In Islam prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need of its own abolition." Now, finality posits the finite, and the Hindu traditions are built on a different notion of time. Hence the usual misunderstanding by the Hindu about the Islamic institution of prophethood as final. But finality need not mean closure. On the contrary, it is like the primary requisite which being taken for granted relieves man to direct his energies towards new channels of living and to cultivate his human and worldly resources. The finality of the idea of prophethood, if we are not mistaken, was to a great extent responsible for the glorious burgeoning of inductive reason, historical and geographical knowledge, of that modern scientific spirit, (which, incidentally, was more in revolt against the Greek cult of the finite and the proportionate than in consonance with it,) that we associate with the Arab civilization.[26] To the same idea can be traced, partly, if not completely, the absence of priesthood and hereditary rights of kings, the frequent

appeals to experience and reason in the Islamic texts, the impetus to action and the pre-occupations with pragmatic considerations. It has given diverse peoples a cohesion which few things else could give to them in their stage of economic development. If the charge is true that it has reduced critical fervour in theology and increased intolerance among the Muslims, then the alleged act is no more and no less culpable than what the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas or of the 'Harijan' weekly among certain sections of the Hindus has committed. Besides, the myopia is of recent origin, and typically modern Indian. Which means that the original religious tradition of the Muslim has been overlaid by other traditions and affected by other factors. As it is, this relative elasticity or mealisticity is supposed to pull the two communities apart. While the fact is that the Hindus are fairly tolerant in regard to theological, religious and metaphysical opinions, creeds and beliefs, and the Muslims are almost democratic in the social practices, the Hindus believe that the (Indian) Muslims are uncritical in their religious matters. The Hindu belief is usually justified on the following ground, which is another feature of Muslim traditions.

The more intimate hold of religion upon Muslim law and society is a fact.[27] Once when a new convert told the Prophet, "Thou art our Prince," the Prophet promptly replied: "The Prince is God, not I." The chief implication of this great dictum consists in the fact that the rule of God is direct and the provider of the principles of superco-, and subordination which in other communities are to be found in the doctrines of civitas, polis, state or Samaj. The second implication is the avoidance of the mediator, the church, priestcraft and sacraments. Another is the subordination of the role of public functionaries to the will of God. Yet a fourth is the spirit of complete surrender, which, in the opinion of some sociologists, is a typically semitic trait. The

indivisibility of religion and law sharply separates Islamic jurisprudence from other systems that are based upon norms directly or indirectly approved by the people or derived from the will, reason, or moral nature of man. This does not mean that Islamic jurisprudence is less democratic; on the contrary, it is probably more so, because Allah rules in the common interests.[28] Numerous injunctions and safeguards are on record to show that the common interests were not equated to those of the faithful.[29] Religion similarly envelops the economic life of the Muslims, though its stranglehold on usury, hitherto responsible for Muslim indebtedness to Hindu money-lenders and the slow growth of commerce-capital in Islamic countries, is daily becoming weak. Against the view put here may be urged the contention that the Shariat does not legislate for conscience and allows of a great variety of conduct by circumscribing itself to the observance of injunctions. But it is not a final distinction inasmuch as fidelity to the minutiae is the key to the Hindu and the Muslim spiritual perfection alike. The more faithful have greater privileges and prestige in both traditions.

The tertiary group consists of the conceptual traditions in the spheres of theology, metaphysics and science. Passing as they do through the intellect, such traditions are of the second remove from beliefs and practices. Here, however, a comparison between Hindu and Muslim concepts is unfair to the Indian Muslim. Very little has been known to be the contribution of the Indian Muslim, as such, to the history of conceptual thought, whereas the Hindus have done what they could in India, and seldom anywhere else. Taking the modern period as our base of speculation, we find that there is complete unity of conceptual traditions in their utter poverty. It pains one to write this, but it is true that not a single concept, as such, has been thrown up by any modern Indian, be he of the majority or of the mino-

rity community, in history, in economics, in political thought, or in philosophy, that would compare favourably with anything in any earlier Indian epoch or in the same period in Europe. Some devastating curse seems to have descended upon Indian brains blasting in a strictly impartial manner the capacity for conceptual thinking; and the pity of it is that no corresponding advantages either in empirical thinking or in activist attitudes have been gained in return either by the Hindus or by the Muslims. Yet, one does notice a difference in outlook in the *Weltanschauung,* and that is as near as one can get into the rarefied atmosphere of relative conceptual achievements in India. We select three points as being more interesting than the rest.

(i) In modern politics, the word 'birth-right' distinguishes the Hindu political attitude from the Muslim. Since Lokamanya Tilak coined that ringing phrase, 'Swaraj is our birth-right,' Hindu politicians have been thinking in terms of birth-right. The result is twofold. It has led to the idea that Hindustan's independence is necessary because it is the land of *birth,* and consequently, as *Hindus* have been born in a greater number and have lived over a longer period in that country, they have the *first* lien on its independence. The shift towards Hindu Mahasabha politics is a matter of drawing the right corollary. The second result belongs more specifically to the region of ideas. Birth-right is much the same thing as the 'natural right' of Roman law. It is different from '*jus gentium;*' it is a matter of commonsense and intuitive interpretation from certain indisputable facts of human nature and, therefore, it is dependent upon the interpreter's interests. Above all, it is anti-intellectual in being grounded upon the emotions of the dispossessed and the debarred. 'Birth-right' always gives strength to the first national movement of colonial people. But in the later stages of any such struggle, it tends to veer towards Fascism

and all that it means. The roots of German and Italian Fascism[30] are to be found in the anti-intellectual, romantic movements of the early nineteenth century which lauded up to the skies the fights of human inheritance, i.e. of birth as such, separable from nature and acquisition. Rosenberg's Blood and Land are variations of the idea of birth-right. It is not suggested that the concept of birth-right has given birth to a Fascist movement in this country. Concepts never do. What we feel is that if it is born, its subsequent philosopher will legitimately seek for its progenitors among those who believed in freedom *as a birth-right and in nothing else*. The seeds of cheap raciology are in that outlook. The Indian Muslims, barring the nationalist section whose number is large but voice not effective, are not committed to the doctrine of birth-right as the source of political freedom. Unless other conditions intervene, the Indian Muslims cannot develop a theory of race. They may talk loosely about it, as they seem to be doing in search of claims for Pakistan, but they can only have a theory of peoples, bound by faith, which, we confess, is also not much of a guarantee against the possibility of their being Fascists. Persecution-mania, for example, may achieve what the concept of natural rights or of race cannot. A frustrated 'middle-class', including the managers and technicians, certainly can, with the help of capitalists-cum-nationalists.

(ii) The second feature of intellectual outlook is to be found in the habits and conventions of thought. Hindus are perfectionists, and Indian Muslims are not. In other words, the former are absolutists and the latter relativists, in spite of, or as Iqbal would say, just for, the traditions of the 'finality of prophethood'. Watch a Hindu's reactions to the report of a leader's departure from correct conduct, a Muslim officer's greater tact in handling complicated situations, a Hindu politician's concern with consistency, or a Muslim politician's layers

of behaviour, and this thesis will not be summarily dismissed. The Hindu mental habits are usually governed by the logic of either/or; Muslim mental habits are concrete, finite, and instrumental. Which probably explains the Hindu complaint that the Muslims are illogical, a-logical, pre-logical. But any student of modern dialectics knows that the rejection of Aristotelian forms does not mean the cessation of thought-processes; we may even disbelieve in logic in a strictly logical way, as some positivist logicians[31] have recently asked us to do, and yet recognize the existence of this order of mental habits. It is not possible for us to discusss here all the reasons for the difference in the two orders of thought-conventions. All that we can do is to suggest that a pioneering, expanding community spreading over diverse peoples, imposing its faith upon them and drawing upon their cultures, a community that has acted as a catalytic agent for many combinations and as a link between epochs and continents, could ill afford to live vigorously with the habits of thought befitting a stabilized, 'closed society' as that of the Hindus. The Indian Muslim's realism, however, is a defence-mechanism. But Muslim realism is coming up fast. The Muslim political attitude is so imitative of the Hindu in the assertion of its negations. Muslim League resolutions are always a few hours later than those of the Congress (Hindu, according to Mr Jinnah). A Muslim politician has of late quoted a Hindu Samhita in favour of Pakistan. A clear case of infection.

(iii) That takes us to the traditional notions of time which, in our opinion, would form the essence of the problem of conceptional traditions. But we would use 'notion' rather than 'concept'. As a concept, time in the heyday of Islam was a derivative of 'function', the contribution of Al-Beruni who extended Newton's formula of interpolation from trigonometrical function to any function. This was a new axis to the world-view as

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Becoming opposed to Being.[32] Coupled with it was the very modern view of change enunciated by Ibn Khaldoun[33] in whose history the constant pre-supposition was of time an objective, creative, evolutionary process of human activity. The Indian Muslim may have nothing to do with this Arab inheritance. Yet he feels that his notion of time is not the cyclic, the recurrent, the repetitive one of the Hindu[34] for whom the alternative is either the mystic extinction of his personal temporal references or a surrender to the broad non-human sweep of the Kalpas and the Yugas.[35] The strength of the cyclic tradition of time over the Hindu mind has been apparent in the Hindu attitude towards this War. Many Hindus feel that it is the end of a Yuga, at least, of the British Empire, so why worry? The Muslim view is different. For him the crisis is the opportunity. In other words, the Hindu suffers time and its cycles, the Muslim bides his time and its chances. The former attitude is deterministic, the latter is human, opportunistic and historical. A Westerner understands the Muslim, and cannot understand the Hindu in this regard.

It may be felt that the concept of non-violence has been omitted from this discussion. But it is a deliberate omission. Non-violence as is commonly understood is, in the author's opinion, not strictly a Hindu view, but a Jain one; although through its proved effectiveness as an instrument of political action and the personal, charismatic prestige of Gandhiji with the Hindu who, in a fit of absent-mindedness, annexes Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism as colonies within his empire of religion, it behaves like a Hindu concept, and an important one at that. At least, the non-Hindus think in that way. Still, it cannot be said to have yet acquired the strength of a tradition. The Hindu Mahasabha does not accept it; even some eminent Congressmen among the Hindus take it with a caveat. On the other hand, the Frontier Gandhi, a Muslim, adopts it, *in toto*. But if this view is incorrect and

non-violence is a Hindu idea, then this concept is an invisible bar sinister to the unity of the two communities. Satyagraha, the corollary or the premiss of non-violence, is not a concept but a technique of action, and an attitude which is the essence of artistic integrity, scientific spirit and moral endeavour. In this it is not confined to any people in any age. Like all techniques, in actual working it is more a surety against the bad and the loose than an assurance of the creative best.

So far the treatment has proceeded along lines of the ready-made and convenient classification of Giddings. The worst of this method is its incapacity to appreciate the dynamics of mutual influence. It leans towards the postulation of separate group-minds on the basis of differences in tradition, which is just vicious. There is no such thing as a Hindu or a Muslim mind. It also tends to introduce valuation by the back-door. Thus, for example, the primary need not always be the most potent at all stages, though it often is. Nor need the tertiary come in the third stage, though it often does. What happens is that the most tangible, the most concrete and the most urgent needs and interests throw up traditions that collect support from other less tangible sources. One example should suffice. Traditions of utilization derive strength from juristic traditions of property-relations as well as from religious traditions. Usually, they form a close pattern and retain form so long as the hard core of primary traditions does not undergo a serious change. Even then, during the process, myths and fictions are raised to avert the crisis. Reorientation may continue for a long time if the shocks are mild and the capacity for absorption is great. Be it also noted that revolution itself may build its own traditions. Still the classification adopted is useful in one vital sense. The primary group is primary because of its more intimate hold over the habits of men. If there is a choice between this group and the other two,

it is this group that obtains. A change in this group must needs bring about some change in the rest, whereas the converse need not be true. 'Primary' may be understood in the sense that a root word bears in relation to its derivatives.

The conclusions of the study of traditions may now be summarized. In the first group, there is a more general measure of agreement between the two communities than in the third. The forms of utilization and appropriation of natural resources and the inaccessibility of mechanical power are the same. Cow-sacrifice is not an appropriation of the organic inferior; disagreement on this question is on another level altogether. If we think that "the effective sanction of toleration is vengeance," then the Hindu reaction to antagonistic equals is more passive. But juridical considerations do not allow this sore of disunion to fester Politically, the fact of subjection is to be entered against the variations in traditions of domination. At the same time, it will have to be admitted that the Muslims are generally less interested in political independence than in their own cohesion. The secondary group generally shows the greatest amount of active synthesis. There is hardly a single aesthetic tradition which is not the result of joint effort in the course of centuries of contact. Hindu religious practices, more often than we imagine, have been 'contaminated' by the Muslim beliefs and rituals, and vice versa. In the sphere of concepts, if we place them behind modern times, differences are prominent. But concepts in India are no longer creative. Therefore, the study of Indian culture as a social process involving the strands of traditions reveals that there are disagreements which an organic union may well cherish in the interests of its own evolution, but which, in the absence of creative desire, understanding and situation and in the presence of deliberate obstacles, have frightened some genuine patriots among the Hindus into the arms of a

static unity, and some Muslims, equally honest in their beliefs, into the arms of a two-nation theory and Pakistan. In short, the 'traditional' grounds for unity today are more passive and negative than creative, and something stronger than the 'logical' interplay of traditions is operating to weaken them. We will analyse them in the following paragraphs.

If in spite of many common traits and their incessant exchange fissiparous tendencies have been increasing in the Hindu-Muslim relation, it is our duty to enquire into the sources of the power of traditions over the minds of men in order that the process of disunion may be correctly understood. Traditions form the social heritage;[36] therefore, on the analogy of biological utility, they should have a social utility that is implicit in uniform behaviour. Orthodoxy has a survival value, but its appreciation by the orthodoxy is not always of the same order of intensity. Threats to existence or prospects of conflict or gain enhance it. In normal time, appreciation of survival is only a routine-performance. Men like to be told of what is to be done and how to behave at critical times. Traditions save thought and deliberate action, hence they perform an economic service. They are also safe and sure, because there is always the horror of a new idea, the fear of the unknown. Men will lose their most precious stakes, say, independence, rather than comprehend the novel and the new. The defence argument is usually on the score of *logical* consistency and the immorality of opportunism.... 'Rationalization', however, is a buttress of the habitual; it avoids unpleasant demands and fortifies men in remaining well-set against upsetting elements. Of all the social forces, inertia seems to be the strongest. Habit, ancient suggestion, and ancestral instincts, all conspire to make the hold of traditions strong. It is also obvious that traditions should have an emotional appeal; they must needs be based upon certain basic tendencies

which, if excited, eliminate competing ideas and energize action, and which, if baulked, lead to neuroses and the search for substitutes. Therefore, the study of the social sentiments and instincts, their relative strength and interplay, is an integral part of the study of Indian culture as a social process. Here also the danger is of sentimental thinking. To avoid it we may use neutral terms, e.g. logical and non-logical conduct, residues and derivatives, coined by Pareto,[37] whose analysis of sentiments is the most scientific of all the sociological treatments of the subject.

We can now be introduced into the sociology of the demand for Pakisthan. The first fact we must notice is that it is as yet *'a demand'*, i.e. a derivation or a group of derivations connected with various types of residues, in greater or less degree. In other words, the derivation is affirmative, authoritarian, verbal,[38] and is in accordance with certain sentiments, interests, and non-material entities. Of course, it can never be *only* a derivation; that is impossible by the very nature of the definition by which derivation must needs be of residues. The strongest residues of which this derivation is an 'official version' are those of the persistence of aggregates and of particularist sociability. The residues of expression through acts and religious exaltation, those of integrity in the face of a disturbance of historical equilibrium or order (in which the Muslims were dominant, as in the pre-British days, the memories of which still linger), and others connected with the desire for a substitute integer, real or imaginary, work with the two previous groups of residues in subsidiary alliance. Therefore, the sociology of Pakistan demand is of the order of Vaihinger's fiction[39] or Sorel's myth, that is to say, of the very real sphere of non-logical conduct with a coating of logic. We repeat that the word 'non-logical' has no sinister meaning. There are numerous examples in Hindu behaviour which are as non-logical as that. The ideology

of Mother India with *Bande Mataram* as a slogan is one such. In fact, the conflict is between the rival derivations of *Bande Mataram* and Pakistan.

Leaving aside residues and derivatives, we may apply the test of traditions to the demand. Here we do not find a single argument on the level of traditional economic differences which would bear scrutiny. Obviously, all over India poverty is common, the lack of opportunities for utilizing new resources is common, and consciousness of class-interests among the masses is equally undeveloped and equally waiting to be developed. And yet, there may be an economic case for the Muslims against the Hindus in India as a whole; we mean the greater number of the owners of the means of production and of the distributors among the Hindus than among the Muslims, and all that it involves. In Bengal, the opposition to the Tenancy Act, and in the Punjab to the Sales Tax, chiefly came from the Hindus, dressed up in the usual disguises. But this case is nowhere in the official version of Pakistan. But we do not blame the Muslim Leaguer. The fact of economic exploitation has not yet sunk into the consciousness of the Hindu or the Muslim to rise again either in the form of a belief or a derivation. Even the Congress felt in terms of the 'Muslim' masses, and not in those of masses, *as a class*, in their contact programme to counteract those very tendencies that have at last culminated in the Pakistan demand. Two points must, however, be mentioned here: (i) Although the official claim for Pakistan does not stand on socialistic grounds, its urge and possibility may be socialistic. For aught one knows, the Pakistan areas, if and when they become sovereign, may develop into socialistic states much sooner than Hindusthan. This prospect may as well be the cause of the panic in certain sections of nationalist-Indians whose vision of India's future does not go beyond state-capitalism. (ii) On higher levels of economy, i.e. within

an Indian Federal Economy, Pakistan has a case. But none of these points relates to traditions. So, it is the political tradition of extra-territorial allegiance based upon community of faith that we have to fall back upon in our analysis of the Pakistan demand. Even here we must not fail to notice that Pakistan, for whatever reasons, maybe the disappearance of the Khalifat, is within the limits of Hindustan. Of course, the implications[40] of an alliance with the Muslims on the other side of the Hindu-Kush are there, though in an unofficial manner. But then similar implications of Hindu-Buddhist alliance across the Himalayas can also be drawn. Religious traditions, though they distinguish the Hindu from the Muslim, have *as such* next to nothing positive in the make-up of the demand. What are called 'religious' differences are really the derivations of 'integrity' grounded on the residue of the persistence of the aggregate. The atrocity-stories published in the Pirpur report were factually controverted by the Congress governments. But that they continued to be believed in, not as facts, but as an overhanging possibility of threat to 'religious traditions' is the vital point, viz. that none cannot kill a fear by a fact, a non-logical derivation by logical arguments or experimental actions. The atrocity-stories were a preliminary move in the ideology of Pakistan. "We cannot bear any more, so in the interests of peace, let us live apart"—thus ran the logic of sentiments, a logic which Aristotle would not care to look into, but sociologists should, if only because it is stronger than the logic of categories and syllogisms. Most assuredly, considerations of prophethood do not form a perceptible element in the demand for Pakistan. The tradition of the community of faith, as different from birth and concomitant function is an important differentium, but it has not yet been officially emphasized as an argument for Pakistan; if it were, then in Pakistan, the Hindus should have no place, which we know to have

been kindly conceded. Still, the community of faith is there in the background, but as a type of 'persistence of aggregates'—residues of the uniform variety. Rather, faith as a social bond has come in mainly because function is not there to forge a higher and deeper synthesis.

Differences in concepts, if they exist, have also nothing to do with the demand. But in Bengal, an integral part of Pakistan, there is hardly any concept which is specifically Muslim, or which is so easily distinguishable from its Hindu counterpart that mutual intolerance might justify the suppression or domination of the other, to avoid which separation is desirable. We have not yet heard much of the Punjabi culture, though there is plenty of culture in the Punjab. That too, we are told by friends, is not so seriously jeojardized that it must shut itself up in Pakistan. But Pakistan *may* develop conceptual traditions which may eventually be distinctively Islamic. That will, we are afraid, take some time, because Pakistan will be immediately busy in keeping its body alive before it can take up and work out the great Arab legacy of inductive intellect and historical sense or the nearer Iranian culture of sweetness and light. The first batch of concepts in Pakistan is likely to be of those of the neighbouring brethren in faith, e.g. the Pathan tribes in the Frontier, or the Afghans on the other side. After all, if Islamic culture is by and large a culture of the Islamic peoples, that of Pakistan must partake of the culture of the peoples resident in that region, even when the 'manifest destiny' of the latter is to be raised to a higher level.

So the demand for Pakistan remains a derivative of only a few traditional and residual differences. Here, however, a note or two of caution is necessary. (i) No residues as such are mutually exclusive. They combine, and the combination, even 'the logical' combination, is a residue. (ii) More often than is imagined, the opposition is between a residue, a derivation, and *their absence*.

In other words the study of differences is mainly one of indifference. But indifference is a mountain of inertia and throws up a huge barrier of resistance to process and continuity, union and synthesis. And here we come to the crux of the problem. If by the demand of Pakistan, the process of Indian history is at all resisted and halted, (and that is the apprehended danger in the light of the dynamics of history, and not that of vivisection which springs only from static and, therefore, conservative ideas of India's future), then the indifferences that have today found shelter under and reinforcement from certain other residues have to be so cultivated that they transfer their relations to those residues that make for the intensification of the larger synthesis involved in the making of India's history. Of all these indifferences, the central are the primary ones connected with traditions of utilization of natural resources. We do not in the least mean that residues are the causes of facts, nor do we hold that facts are the causes of residues. Sociological reasoning does not proceed on such lines. What we hold is that facts are collected by residues, and residues by facts. As Pareto shrewdly remarks: "Changes occur because no forces come into play to affect either the facts or the residues or both facts and residues—new circumstances occasion changes in modes of life." If we accept this, then the categorical imperative is to consciously bring into play the new forces, and not to wait for them in prayerful attitude. Once that is done, residues and derivations will change, the latter more quickly than the former. Then also will differences in religious traditions be less effective, because modes of living have the simplest and the closest association with acts of livelihood and only remote relations with religious traditions. The farther the remove of a tradition from the nucleus of a residue and its pseudo-logical explanations in terms of concepts, the less the resistance it offers to changes. The history of the relation between

Christian Church and Pagan rites is there for all to see. Nearer home, we have the McNair report on the recent Dacca riots in which the gradual substitution of the religious factors by the economic ones released by the Bengal Tenancy Act has been noted in explanation of the psychology of communal ill-feeling in East Bengal.

The most radical solution offered so far of the Pakistan problem has been to bring about economic changes in the lives of the 'Muslim' masses. But this is not enough; it only shirks the issue by adding the word 'masses' to the Muslim problem. It may even be called mischievous by the Muslims. In fact, this movement was taken as a challenge, and it gave an enormous prestige to the Muslim League before it adopted the atrocities stories. So the proper approach is through the economics of the *masses*, as *a whole class*, irrespective of caste or creed. Let us be clear on this fundamental point: the mass is neither the crown nor the people; it is a socio-economic category covering the non-owners, including the managers, of all communities. Therefore also, the spirit of the approach to the masses can never be either of infiltration or initiation. It can only be that of expert midwifery. That may mean that communism is the only cure of communalism, which is, of course, a counsel of perfection, i.e. of despair for those who have fear in their souls. But so is Pakistan. Personally, we do not entertain much hope about the immediate solution of the problem of cultural union on these lines. Indian thinkers and politicians would much rather tolerate a complete vivisection along geographical, religious and cultural lines than admit the horizontal divisions and work them up into higher levels of agreement. Many of our anti-Imperialists mistrust both the communalist and the communist, but they dislike the communist more. So it will not be surprising if the communalists, the Government, the Congress and the League should combine "to crush the pest"—with Churchill & Co.

laughing in their sleeve. Meanwhile, the unity of Modern Indian Culture has to be understood as a continuous social process in which new residues, new combinations of residues will have to be aroused by the development of traditions and modes of living which do not as yet exist or only exist in embryo. This is high creative endeavour which entails the future of all the communities in India, and, therefore, of the continuity and enrichment of Indian Culture. After all, Indian culture is more a union than a unity; at least, the higher levels of its unity have been, and can only be reached through the union (not the fusion) of the *distinctive* cultures of nationalities in different regions, even if we cannot sociologically concede the *distinct* culture of a separate Muslim nation in India.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC PROCESS AND THE 'MIDDLE CLASS'

In the two previous chapters we have been concerned with what is usually recognised as the factor that makes of Indian culture a union, and what is simultaneously held responsible for driving a wedge through it and making it, at least, two. If one takes only cross-sections of traditions, the union seems to suffer a little on the score of uniformity and homogeneity. No amount of wishful thinking will get over that fact. At the same time, union is a concept that is big enough a house to have many mansions. For example, it may be 'historical'. But which history? In the academic history, facts are born free and equal, and detest chains of structural generalisations. The result is that while a thousand cases of Hindu-Muslim collaboration and good feeling scattered over a millennium of our history are trotted out, an equal number of cases of bad feeling may be rescued from a mere ten years' period. Such attempts have been made, but they have failed to convince. So we do not propose to 'give instances'. We would much rather describe the processes of structural changes in the Indian society. They can be understood only in terms of economic history. The processes may at once be summed up thus.

The backbone of Indian society was feudal; it was served by a considerable amount of commerce-capital; foreign commerce sought to displace the latter; as commerce-capital and feudalism were symbiotic, the former could not be tampered with without upsetting the social equilibrium; a new type of land settlement was thus introduced by the East India Company to achieve equili-

brium. Naturally, the class of people who were in charge of the commercial interests, e.g., the bankers, could only have limited duties from now on. On the other hand, the new land settlement created a new class of men who were not necessarily the descendants of the older chiefs, headmen, farmers and assignees. This new body was Hindu as its predecessor in the Muslim period was. But the forces released by the impact of foreign capital upon the indigenous commerce-capital and by the incidence of the new landlordism upon what may be called the Indian type of feudalism did not meet. One of the main functions of the educational system initiated by the East India Company at much about the same period was to make them meet. The sense of frustration that has given rise to a spurious type of religious feeling, the fissiparous tendencies in the Indian traditions that have led to the postulation of a two-nation theory, one the Hindu and the other the Muslim, and the extremely poor results in intellectual achievements, with a slow rise in literacy, on the one hand, and unemployment on the other, are nothing but the after-effects of this incompetent social surgery. Beneath the plaster, we find that either the bones have not granulated, or that they have done so in a way that necessitates a major operation.

Indian feudalism is not on all fours with either the Continental or the English. "Indian feudalism is fiscal and military, but not manorial,"[1] if you exclude certain small estates and jagirs in Rajputana and Central India. In the very ancient times, the basis of land tenure had been the family, rather than the individual. The Crown enjoyed a loose sort of prerogative over the villages. To meet obligations, landlords had soon to be created by adequate grants from the king who was the ultimate and undefined owner of all the land. But the royal demand as well as its satisfaction were confined only to the due discharge of fiscal obligations.

The actual cultivators of land were soon turned into tenants. In the Buddhist period, the cultivating landlord was still the ideal and 'hireling' still a term of reproach, but the real picture was of the Jataka tale in which sturdy peasants had left their paternal acres to toil for the royal capitalists. Large holdings were also appearing. It is interesting to observe that some of them were farmed by the Brahmins. There were village commons, with a daily change in pasturage. The Crown, however, retained its right to tax the individual peasant proprietor in the village. Duties on raw produce and special levies on agricultural produce for the state granary during the war and famine were common. There were 'abwabs', and forced labour too. The Crown had monopoly over forest lands and ownerless estates. The monasteries were given large properties. Monks could neither possess nor cultivate, but the 'Samgha' very easily could. The actual working of the monastic system of agriculture is described by the Chinese Scholar, I-Tsing, who stayed in India from A.D. 673 to 685. "According to the teaching of the Vinaya, when the corn is cultivated by the 'Samgha', the share in the product is to be given to the monastic servants or some other families by whom the actual tilling has been done. Every product should be divided into 6 parts, and 1/6 should be levied by the 'Samgha'. The 'Samgha' has to provide the bulls as well as the land for cultivation. Sometimes the division of the produce would be modified according to the seasons. Most of the monasteries followed the above custom but there are some who are very avaricious and do not divide the produce, but the priests thus give out the work to servants, male and female, and see that the farming is properly done." In other words, the general rule was like what is known as 'Bargadari', with hired labourers or paid servants. The existence of the agriculture proletariat is also indirectly indicated in the Hindu Law Books of this period.

It is clear from the above that the pre-Muslim period of Indian history had already developed landlordism, mainly through grants by kings, with a mass of hirelings or agricultural labourers without land at the bottom. The inter-relations of the three main parties concerned were governed by obligations, which, however loose, restricted the respective rights. In the Hindu society no gift has been absolute. The obligations to the king came to the payment of taxes and the rendering of occasional military service; and the king could not, and would not, demand more in virtue of any superior right. Herein lies one source of the basic difference between the continental type of feudalism and the Indian. There the king shared his sovereignty as the first among equal lords or kinsmen.[3] Indian sovereignty was not thus circumscribed; on the other hand, customs and traditions were the *only* checks. Brahmins and Buddhist monks interpreted them and wielded an authority, a close parallel to which is to be found in the Egyptian brand of feudalism. This distinction in the king-landlord relation accounts for the two ways in which extension of the royal authority was checked in the two areas of the globe. English barons, for example, had to take the people with them to resist the king; in India, the chiefs could only start new principalities.[4] That the central authority remained weak before the British period, with the corollary that the intellectual class, Brahmins and others, would always stand against revolt,[5] is thus historically understandable. At the same time, the royal right over land did *not* amount to ownership in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the term. Even conquest did not confer ownership. Jaimini and his commentators, Sabara-Swami, Sri Khanda and Madhavacharya, i.e., right down to quite a late period (and all were famous jurists), insist that land is *not* the king's property.[6] How far their almost socialist view, "what is yielded by land as the fruit of labour on the part of all beings must be

enjoyed by them as their own property," was actually practised is very doubtful. We have a mass of evidence of exploitation or 'pidan', as Kautilya puts it. When the main plank of the king-chief relation was fiscal, the only ones who could escape the payment of taxes were the privileged class of Brahmins, the monasteries and the favourites. If ownership of the Crown was undefined, its demand for money could never flag; if that of the chief was indefinite, extortion would know no bounds except the ability to pay and a conscience, both elastic commodities. Indian landlords have always been tax-collectors right from the Vedic times. Communal ownership[7] related to the village common, which was the grazing land. We surmise, however, that the population of India could not be large[8] and that the area of the common land must have been extensive. If that surmise is correct, then the inference may be drawn that private property existed side by side with, but confined within the limits of, communal ownership. Though there is no parallel to the English enclosure movement, yet encroachments upon the common land must have taken place, but without much lasting effect upon its economy. We had no such woollen industry to necessitate large and enclosed pastures, nor did the easy extension of the chief's authority by mere expansion or conquest mean any change in agriculture. Whatever patriotic historians[9] may say about rural advisory boards, royal solicitude, shastric injunctions, absence of serfdom, etc., the land of India has always been used by the powers that be for taxes, and not in its own interests.

The Muslims only played a variation of the theme.[10] The central administration had to be stronger than what it was. So the *military* connection with the chiefs had to be emphasised. The rates of *fiscal* dues were also raised a little, because wars were more frequent and on a larger scale and the Durbar expenses were higher. The exigencies of the foreign rule demanded three things;

(1) confirmation of the hitherto undefined rights of land-ownership of those chiefs who accepted the Muslim rule. They were Hindus. Naturally, Timur invaded India to correct the pro-Hindu sentiments of the Muslim rulers of Hindustan; (2) the creation of a number of assignees who were high officials pledged to give military support, the cost of which was partly paid in nominal salaries but mainly met by the grant of large tracts of land which they could use freely for the purpose of raising revenue. The surplus was considerable. These assignees had a larger proportion of Muslims than the older chiefs had. They, however, left the actual collection to the existing revenue officials, i.e., the hereditary village headmen and accountants, who were Hindus, and also to newly appointed agents who could be and were often Hindus. These gentlemen in their turn would raise their status if they had the requisite ability. (3) The forging of bureaucratic links with the landlords. All were *officials,* either of the central government or of the assignee. The combination of bureaucratic functions with the fiscal and the military makes the jagir system into which the older Indian landlordism developed look very similar to the Russian type of feudalism, known as the boyar system.[11] When the central authority became involved in its own preservation, it was this class of jagirdars, mostly Muslims, in alliance with the older Hindu chiefs,[12] who revolted and formed practically independent regional governments in the conduct of which the Hindu chiefs had a great share. Meanwhile, the latter had managed to become hereditary against Hindu injunctions and Muslim intentions. In Bengal, Oudh, Central India, and in the south, we find numerous instances of Hindu-Muslim solidarity. The Hindu and the Muslim assignees, chiefs and the able farmers had at last formed an *economic class,* viz., the baronial. Under the pressure of the same forces that led to the formation of that

class, the Bengal and Oudh governments under the Muslims, particularly the Pathans, became *national* ones. The connection between Hindu-Muslim solidarity and nationalism was economic, inasmuch as both were the historical expression of the rise of a class. It is a historical fact that the Muslim rule was economically a progressive force inasmuch as it was an advance upon the earlier inchoate forms of economic relations. Equally painful it may be for some to hear that the 'pure' Hindu zamindars, i.e., the older chiefs of this period, played a reactionary role and that the Muslim assignees a revolutionary and national one.[13]. From that event can also be traced the history of national literatures and the Bhakti resurgence which synthesized the Hindu and the Muslim cultural traditions into cultures of nationalities. Such is the general picture the main outlines of which could not be changed by Sher Shah's predilection for direct contact with the peasants, nor even by Akbar's attempts to substitute kind by cash in the Crown lands. Full money-economy came in the British period.

The system of farming out in vogue in former times was continued with little alteration even after the introduction of British rule. The tax-gatherers, known as zamindars, were mostly the descendants of the former "Mustagirs", or "Sadrmalguzars", though some, of course, belonged to the old feudal families. It is interesting to observe that in Section 39 of Pitt's Act of 1784 —a devout measure to stop the oppression and corruption of the times—ryots, zamindars, taluqdars are placed in the same category in matters of payment of tribute, rents and services. In the Company's Analysis of Laws and Regulations of the said Act, the word 'Ryot' remains. But, subsequently, the word 'Ryot' was changed into Rajah, and the Cambridge History of India followed suit. Even under the permanent settlement, the zamindars did not acquire absolute proprietary right. Cornwallis had no intention to perpetuate a class whose claim was

derived from some remote historical right; he was only interested in the present-day source of the right. He introduced stringent sale laws which revolutionized the old order and ruined a large number of the ancient families. The status of the zamindar was often described to indicate its nature of being a conditional office. As late as 1865, long after the introduction of the permanent settlement, the Calcutta High Court in their full bench judgement in a rent case[14] denied the absolute right of the zamindar to the soil.

In the United Provinces, even the pseudo-proprietary right conferred on the Bengal zamindars was not allowed, and permanent settlement was not introduced although it had been promised by the proclamations of 1802 and 1805. The settlements only introduced a glorified form of farming, and the early settlement reports reveal that settlement was made in most cases with the former "mustagirs" and "mukaddams" who had been erroneously treated as owners. The revenue policy in these provinces was directed against the growth of landlordism of the Bengal type, and Governor-Generals like Lord Hastings and revenue officials like Bird and Thomason denounced the permanent settlement as a cause of the most grievous oppression. The zamindari, pattidari, and Bhaiyachara tenures were all essentially based on farming principles, and no proprietary rights were created as a result of such tenures beyond a limited interest in the land. As in the past ages, the zamindar's tenure under British settlements partook more of the nature of an *office*, with certain rights and privileges attached to it, than of a proprietary estate in land. But, and this is the important point, the official duties could not extend much beyond collection of revenue and entertainment. With English officials holding the keys to administration, these duties lost their dignity and the associated authority of more spacious days.

Even the taluqdars, who obtained after the mutiny

extravagant privileges to which they themselves had made no pretensions, had originally been revenue contractors under the nawab-wazirs, and only a small minority belonged to feudal families of ancient date. The so-called "mushroom" or "impure" taluqdars preponderated; they had been official favourites before they obtained the right to collect the revenue. The farming system prevailed extensively in Oudh on account of the laxity of the nawabi rule which favoured the growth of "mushroom" taluqdars who were no more than glorified "chakladars". The "amani" system was only rarely tried, and the vicious "ijara" system was generally in force, the farmers collecting the amount of the "theka" and paying into the treasury the stipulated amount. The tenure of the taluqdar was, however, never a fixed one, and it could be changed at the discretion of the ruler. In theory too, therefore, the taluqdari tenure under the nawab-wazirs had been that of a rent callector, and it was political reasons which induced the British Government grown wiser with the cynical wisdom of the mutiny, to abandon the ideas that had inspired the first summary settlement in the time of Dalhousie. The economic significance of the Mutiny, except in Oudh where it was more or less 'a people's war,' consisted in the attempt of the feudal order to keep its privileges intact by resisting any change in the exploitative and any reduction of the administrative functions of the class as such.[15] Even after the general confiscations of 1858, it is legally doubtful how far the taluqdari right over the land is absolute. When Mr Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, the Revenue Minister in the U.P., casually called the taluqdars "thekadars," or sub-contractors, he had the full support of history.

In the South, the position of the landlord vis-a-vis the Crown, and of the Crown vis-a-vis the cultivator, did not differ from that in the North, except in local details, during the pre-British period. Thus, for example, there

were the usual grants of lands and the imposts, while assessment followed the variety of the crops.[16] In the British period, whatever changes were introduced were practically for the whole of India irrespective of the period of settlement. The sum and substance of these changes was that instead of the old feudal class, almost independently discharging military and administrative obligations in addition to the payment of annual and special tributes to the Crown out of the revenue collected on the strength of hereditary 'sanads', a new class was created to collect revenue and do what it liked with the land, only subject to the judicial control in accordance with the general purpose of the settlement and the subsequent Tenancy laws. In other words, if they duly paid the revenues and otherwise remained good boys and loyal citizens, the zamindars were given the full right to act and live as they liked, which was certainly very much of a living on the huge surplus and the unearned increments. The common features, be it noted, between the old and the new class, were (i) that both the classes had some form of connexion with the administrative machinery, (ii) both had a Hindu majority in their ranks, and (iii) both cared for surplus, and not for land. The socio-economic basis of the Hindu-Muslim conflict was there, but it could not become patent. One would have welcomed a clarification of issues, but by the other policy in regard to trade and commerce the process of agrarian proletarization was denied its fulfilment in the emergence of an industrial proletariat. More of which anon. But, in the beginning, the British rule for its very existence and stability certainly envisaged a much closer co-operation with the new class. It also demanded a higher standard of service in regularity and liberal exactions. Mr Kuppuswamy, in a brilliant series of articles to the *Hindu* (April, 1938), showed the intentions of the East India Company and of the Government of India towards the performance of the prescribed

duties of this class. His position is that the zamindar, legally, as a rent collector, is a public servant, and the same standard of rectitude and responsibility could be demanded of him as of any civil servant. He gives the following arguments :—

1. In the government villages in Madras, called Ayan, by the common law of the country, the state fixes land revenue, collects it through its own staff, and changes it in accordance with what it considers to be necessary in the light of the changed economic conditions. (This point, however, does not distinguish the British settlement with either the Muslim or the Hindu under which the Crown also did possess its own land. But it does not also support the taluqdars' use of 'Sir', or of the Behar zamindars' use of the 'Ba-kasht' land.)

2. In zamindari land, the zamindar collects the public land revenue (Raja-bhagam—the share of the Government) in his charge. Justice Reilly in 63 Madras Law Journal says: "There is no doubt that the theory of revenue administration held by the government was that the zamindar in a permanently settled estate had a right to collect from the ryot the 'Rajbhagam' or the government's share of the produce of the land."

3. In 1864 the Board of Revenue gave this summary of the relative rights of the zamindars and ryots: "In the earliest times of which we have record, the right of the state to a share in the produce of the land was limited and that limit was such as to leave a sufficient margin for the growth of valuable property in the land appertaining with the occupant whose right to retain the possession on payment of the limited share was inviolable and hereditary. The origin of the zamindar's office was comparatively a modern one, and that whatever its origin, zamindars derived their rights from the state which could not confer more than it had posed and exercised. The state asserted and even in later times exercised the power of resumption to exercising its right

over the zamindars and thereby altering the terms and conditions of the ryots' tenure. The framers of the Permanent Settlement proposed to relinquish to the zamindars an allowance for their personal benefit out of the average state demand in past years on the zamindari and to fix the zamindar's payment unalterably for ever, leaving to him all the benefits derivable from the extention of cultivation and improvements in the culture of the land but to restrict his demands on the ryot to the rate or share established in the village by the officers appointed for the purpose."

4. The position of the zamindar regarding irrigation works was clearly enunciated by the Privy Council in the zamindar of Cavetnagar's case; "The public duty of maintaining existing tents and of constructing new ones in many places was originally overtaken by the Government of India and upon a settlement of the country in many instances devolved upon zamindar." The right of distribution of water among ryots that was enjoyed by the zamindar was also derived from state. (51 I.C. 899).

It may seem that the mind of the East India Company and of the Government of India was not made up even after the Fifth report. But explanation in terms of the fight between the Good Spirit and the Evil Spirit is not sufficient. The conflict between the liberal philosophy of the Victorian *bourgeoisie* and the older English traditions in regard to India belongs to the realm of apologetic. What really happened was that in the earlier period a buffer class had to be created, and that in the later period, when the British rule was fully established, that class was no longer indispensable. The solicitude of the Government towards the tenants cannot be interpreted as solicitude for agriculture, because by that time the buffer class which could alone improve the land had been more or less completely divested of any responsibility towards it. Of course, there had never been any

such investment either under the Muslims or under the Pre-Muslims. But then the chiefs and the assignees and the farmers performed military functions and would govern their own territories without much let or hindrance from the centre. Now the buffer class had no such functions, and those among them who traced their ascent to the old Rajas and Muslim Nawabs, either through fiction or blood, were defunctioned. Such a class can hardly be called a feudal class because it did not discharge socially continuous functions; it was only allowed to cherish ownership over land as compensation for non-functioning. Even then the English judges and revenue officials began to put constructions on behalf of the ryots which pinched away many grains of privileges.[17] The only feudal class, as has been noted above, resides in the nooks of Indian states, owing direct allegiance to their chiefs, but indirectly to the overlord, viz., the Crown. Thus we find that the new bones were badly set. No wonder that the body limps and creaks. The defective surgery has caused an outgrowth and the consequential sense of pain, inferiority, and frustration.

But the new class also included another section of the Indian people, namely, those whose trade and commerce were curtailed by the banking interests and by other special measures. Commerce-capital had developed in India in the same way as it did in Europe, subject to the limitations of geography and the state of arts and crafts in the preceding epoch. Among the masses in rural areas, the bare physical needs determined the nature of the major occupation, namely, agriculture, and tradition dictated the rule of thumb methods in the home industries which operated through apprenticeship in families, castes and guilds. But in the town a merchant class arose very early in the day. We find references to their existence in the Vedic, and to their prosperity in the Buddhist, literature. They were no

small traders or mere shop-keepers. In spite of what may now appear to be their small transport facilities, they surveyed the market situation in nearly all its aspects.[18] Consumption and distribution, chiefly of fancy goods, were co-ordinated by their personal efforts. They were great travellers and displayed their valuable wares in foreign ports and courts. In every sense, they were merchant adventures taking risks over perilous seas on strange land-routes and in strange company, making enormous profits, the proofs of which lay in their conspicuous waste and considerable charities to the monasteries, universities and welfare institutions, no less than in their heavy tributes to the king. So late as the days of Balban, their 'Durshanees' to the roving Emperor were fabulous in extent. Within the specified area of production as well as inside the premises for manual conversion, men and material would be brought together by them. The work of co-ordination was smoothed by the guilds which were usually conterminous with the castes. Even today, we find their remnants scattered all over India, at Madura, Benares, Berhampur, and Indore. In other words, the commercial functions they performed were grounded upon social production, even if the terms of the latter were circumscribed. The trader also acted as an intermediary between the village producer and the town dweller. If in the pre-British period the balance between rural and urban economies was better maintained than it is now, it was mainly because of him. One section of his class further developed its activities by financing trade and commerce and by building storage rooms, a counterpart of modern warehouses. Early references to the warehouses are not plenty, but from the sixteenth century they abound, particularly, in Western India.

Prior to the advent of the British and other European powers interested in the trade of the East, the indigenous banking system[19] was centralised in parti-

cular families. They would finance the military adventures of the kings and nobles, the commercial enterprises of merchant adventurers, as well as town industry with its ramifications in the hinterland. The village baniya, of course, was left in peace to look after purely rural needs. The Chettiars of Madras, the Seths of Gujerat and other banking houses are mentioned in old records. The Jagat Seth family stood as a perfect example of the indigenous type of banking. These families would run their business through the *hundi* system, and its effectiveness is manifest in the fact that nearly the whole of Indian trade was run, controlled and organised by them. During the later Muslim period, the family of Jagat Seth had nearly ousted every other. It was even allowed to mint its own coins. The fall of Murshid Kuli Khan's dynasty in Bengal was brought about by the opposition of this family's financial interest. Likewise, in the province of Bombay, more specially on the coastal towns of Thatta, Broach and Surat, the family banks controlled all Indian trade, and if the briskness of shipping is any criterion, they must have been very rich in the Western Coast. The relation between these banks and foreign trade of India is not very clear. But the relation between these two can be understood by a study of the shipping conditions in those days. Parkinson[20], quoting N. Conti, states that "the natives of India build some ships larger than ours, capable of containing 2,000 butts and with five sails and as many masts." Parkinson further says: "There can be no question but that ships of this size......were still to be found there in the seventeenth century." There is no "distinct account how these ships disappeared." From that time the foreign trade of India fell more or less fully into the hands of Arab traders who carried the goods from India to the Persian Gulf and thence in caravans to Alleppo and Dardanelles to be shipped to the Mediterranean countries of Europe. Evidences of actual Indian enterprise

in shipping for carrying goods on ships to other foreign countries are there, but not numerous. Shivaji, in the seventeenth century, maintained a fleet, manned and run by Indian sailors, but its object was piracy of the Moghal cargo-ships. The Moghals also maintained ships manned by Indians, but their purpose does not appear to have been commercial. They, however, carried Mecca pilgrims to and from Jeddah in the Red Sea.

The seventeenth century was the age of naval enterprise for the European countries, Portugal, Holland, France, England and Spain. Although the combined Spanish and Portuguese fleet had been decisively beaten by the English as early as A.D. 1588, the Portuguese were the first to realize the importance of capturing the Eastern trade. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English had their respective settlements on the coastal towns of Goa, Calicut, Pondicherry, Surat. They had also their depots and warehouses at inland towns. The advantage that these European countries had was that they could carry the merchandise via the Cape, while the Arab traders had to employ both ships and caravans in their trade with the East. The caravan route from the ports of the Persian Gulf ran along the courses of the Euphrates and the Tigris. But the two mighty rivers and the long sandy route leading to the ports of Alleppo and Tripoli and to the Dardanelles had to be negotiated. This route was not safe either; the caravans were often looted by organized bands of robbers. The Arabs were thus handicapped in their competition with the Western traders. By the end of the third decade of the eighteenth century, the competition between the European powers had come to an end, and the English and the French only were in the field. Both of them, however, quickly realized the importance of gaining royal favour. The English had succeeded in getting Firmans from the Emperor and Nishan from his sons.[21] They also maintained good

relations with the indigenous bankers from whom in times of emergency they procured loans. One Virjee Vora is reported to have advanced them money at a low rate of interest and of his own accord.[22]

Indigenous banking was no doubt primarily a money-lending affair. Usually, the banks were small concerns run by families who thus formed a separate caste. These banks would lend money and also "perform the additional function of a money changer which yielded a good profit." But they "played an important part in financing the trade of the country by means of credit instruments. But what is even more striking is the evidence of signal services they rendered to the State, not only as the officers of the Royal Mints but also by advancing to the Royal Treasury large sums of money in times of national need."[23] The help offered to the State, and in later times, to the Company, placed them in high favour with the government, though society still looked askance. These indigenous bankers also occasionally helped the revenue collectors. "As the land-owners were unable to collect their dues from the cultivators at the frequent intervals as the government instalments fell due, the indigenous bankers agreed to be their sureties and paid the revenue on their behalf, in bills at 15 or 20 days' date."[24] It is also possible that these bankers had a hand in controlling the currency. Coins of dynasties flourishing prior to the Moghul dynasty were current, and since those coins were worn out by constant handling they were not accepted in the market. So these bankers employed sharafs to assess the value of the coins and accept them not on face value but on metal value. "The system of currency and coinage during the Moghul period, with its large number of mints scattered all over the country which issued metallic currency of various classes, also provided the indigenous banker with the important and profitable business of money changing."

The rate of interest charged by these bankers varied from 6 per cent to 500 per cent.[25] Sometimes these bankers would lend money on a high rate of interest to an individual or to a concern, although either could borrow the sum at a lower rate of interest from money-lenders with small capital. The influence of bankers was so great that the smaller money-lenders would not venture to lend the money for fear of being ruined by the ill-will of bankers.

Thus we find these banks functioning as money-lending agencies (*a*) to individuals, (*b*) to private concerns, (*c*) to the state in times of national need, and (d) to foreign companies. They would sometimes act as revenue collectors, and control the currency. They were thus inseparably connected with both inland and foreign trade. This last function of the indigenous banks requires explanation. In Moghul times, more particularly in the time of Shah Jahan, a large portion of whose income was derived from trade, the ports of Surat, Broach and Thatta were leased out to individual bidders. They were to impose the export and import duties on the merchandise, and naturally amassed huge fortunes. Sometimes the bidding was so high that the lease owner would become a defaulter. These lease owners, therefore, would fall back upon the indigenous banker for ready cash, and the latter would advance the sum on a very high rate of interest. But the native lease-holders could not have their say in matters of imposing duties on exports and imports on every occasion. Sometimes, as in the case of the English, the traders had direct 'firmans' and 'nishans' in their favour. In the internal trade, the bankers had the final word. They issued demand hundis to the traders, discounted them and remitted money to various other trading centres. Even after the foreign firms got going, they would make advances for short period on the security of goods under their control. They would also advance money to artisans

on the security of their wives' ornaments or on their household belongings. These bankers had also a hand in financing agriculture. Their agents would lend cash and kind to cultivators holding the standing crop as security.

What happened to those families of bankers and their functions? How is it that their number dwindled until they were either absorbed into the innocuous professions of money-lending and money changing or into the new land-owning class? The process is more clear in Bengal than either in Bombay or Madras. The Northern portion of the modern province of Bombay was, and still remains, the seat of Jains who had always been traders in preference to being cultivators. Jainism stood in the way of tilling and thus hurting the soil, which was none too fertile either. So the bankers who established themselves on the Western coastal towns and played such an important part in the trade of India were not easy to be dislodged. Similarly, in the southern ports of Madras. Bengal, however, was differently situated. We have no evidence to say that in the early centuries the commercial class was ever very strong there; on the other hand, we know that another class, consisting of the Brahmins, the Sramans, and the bureaucrats had been in the ascendant from the eighth to the thirteenth century.[26] Nevertheless, the traders were not a minority, nor was their role insignificant. Medieval Bengali literature makes great play of the exploits of the Saodagars.[27] Foreign travellers indicate a high degree of commercial prosperity in the hinterland.[28] The Brahminical supremacy no doubt succeeded in curbing the importance of this class of traders and merchantmen.[29] This continued right up to eighteenth century. Still there was plenty of capital in Bengal, and it did not drop from the skies. It flowed from the North-East, Tibet, Assam and beyond.[30] But in the pre-British days, Bengal's imports from the North and the East

flowed mostly towards the courts. Calcutta, her most important port, was created by the British. And no sooner was it established than the Agency Houses were started.[31] The banking families in Murshidabad and Patna were more concerned with revenue collection and remittance than with internal trade. This was because of the fact that Bengal was a frontier province, and outside west Bengal the hold of Delhi was so loose that collection had to be left entirely to the local agent. So once the fiscal power was taken off, the Seths' function became attenuated; and once the currency was stabilized, the 'poddars' lost their job. The functional atrophy of this commercial class was further facilitated by a number of factors:[32] (1) The *dastak* system. It was 'a permit, a document authorizing the free transit of certain goods and their exemption from customs duties.' First granted by the Mughal Governor of Bengal in 1656 to the East India Company for Rs. 3,000/- a year, it was the object of heart-burning and much protest by the later nawab, Murshid Quli Khan.[33] The Company's servants gave a more liberal interpretation to the already generous transaction and pleaded that the amount was for the whole trade of Bengal, internal and external, and in perpetuity. Emperor Farrukshiyar's new firman (1717) did not improve the situation, but the E. I. Company acquiesced in the Nawab's interpretation that the amount covered only the sea-borne trade. The internal trade continued to be supervised by the Nawab's officials, and the Company retaliated by shifting their activities from Hugli to Calcutta, under the ramparts of Fort William. In this new city, both the internal and the external trade could be carried on peacefully with the help of native compradors who flocked there. The 'ancient' families of Calcutta were started by these gentlemen. A comparison is possible with the 'aristocrats' of the Shanghai international settlements. Bengali culture of the nineteenth century takes its cue from

the taste of these Calcutta compradors. When they first came into contact with the Company, Indian society had not heard of them. They were neither of the old banking families, nor of the Brahmin caste. Later on, they would buy up land and become zamindars, patronise Sanskrit to please the pandits, learn English and ape their manners to play the Saheb; in other words, they would be the Bhadralok or the Baboo. In those days, the Baboo had a more pleasant connotation, and the deterioration in its meaning marked the disintegration of this artificial grouping of floating individuals. Today, not only the Deputy Collectors but also lower grade assistants in offices resent the appellation. (2) Agency-houses[34] and the Banks that sprang from their loins formed the second factor. The first took up the financing of the internal trade. The native was shy in his dealings with the captains of foreign ships. To conquer his shyness a high rate had often to be paid. Foreign trade had not much interest for the native money-lender. So agency-houses were started by a few enterprising foreigners who in a short course of time concentrated in their hands both the internal and the external business of the land. But then the East India Company was being transformed; it was necessary to stop the currency-muddle; war had to be conducted, peace restored, famine checked. The directorate at home did not look with favour at private attempts to establish banks. So a state-aided bank came into existence at last, and the agency-houses became entrepreneurs, pure and simple. Still the agency-houses could not do without native intermediaries. They were the Mutsaddis, the guarantee-brokers, the ware-house keepers, and so on. With the help of the first batch they consolidated the new middle class. None of them were scions of the Jagat Seth family. But without exception they were all Hindus.. They too became landlords; they too were educated. From the factotum of the English nabob to

the frustrated Baboo of today is a continuous process. But between the commercial magnate who would venture out to the Indies, to Champa, Bali, Sumatra, and Ceylon, cross the mountains into Burma and China, who would finance the adventures of Kings, and fight them socially, if necessary, who could survive the loot of the Burgees and the durshanee of a couple of crores of tankhas to the Nawab or the Emperor, who would handle hundis with an all-India circulation—between such men, on the one hand, and the progenitors of the Ghoses, Boses, Mitters, the Debs, the Lahas and the Basaks, on the other, there was something more than a gulf. It was a chasm in social evolution. The sense of this vacuity overhangs Bengali culture and accounts for its dissociation with its Indian context. It was sought to be filled up by the debris of a *Hindu* nationalism, ancient glories, and the lumber of Western culture and democracy. Occasionally, better things would be thrown in. But the chasm remained, only the eyes became used to it. Not that it can now be bridged or should be bridged. A sociologist can only note the fact of the break in the Indian social process involved in the liquidation of the older middle-class and the creation of new land-owning and professional groups to consolidate foreign rule, and contrast it with the continuity in the rise of the industrial *bourgeoisie* in Europe out of its own feudal and commercial orders. With such a difference in the very constitution of the elite-group, the brittleness of Indo-Anglian culture as compared to the solidity of the Victorian age should be obvious; with such a hiatus in the growth of the elite much of the inner weakness of modern Indian renaissance, its nostalgia, its unrootedness, its haunting sense of inferiority, should only be natural.

CHAPTER IV[1]

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

The progress of English education must be understood along with and in the context of the liquidation of the commercial class and the creation of a land-owning class. As such, it is an integral part of the modern Indian social process. By the middle of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese had brought the sweets of Western education to the evangelized heathens and their orphans. When the Portuguese power declined, the English and the Danish appeared on the scene. By the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the Danish missionaries had started a number of schools in Madras with headquarters at Tranquibar. English was taught in Schwartz' schools. The first missionary school was opened in the city of Bombay in 1718. Calcutta still cherishes the names of Chaplain Bellamy and Rev. Kiernander, and has a whole street to honour the memory of the Free School Society. The Court of Directors approved these missionary endeavours to teach English to impress the natives 'with sentiments of esteem and respect for this British nation.' But the directors soon became wise, announced the desire to remain strictly neutral in religious matters, and discountenanced educational enterprises by missionaries. The fact is not well known that Carey, Marshman and Ward, the trio to whom Bengal owes so much, had to confine their activities a few miles away from Calcutta, in the Danish settlement of Serampore, for fear of being packed back to England.

But the missionaries were not the only ones in the field. The Calcutta School Book Society, the Bombay Native School Society, and the Bombay Educational Society under the inspiring leadership of Monstuart

Elphinstone, were well started on their career of usefulness in their respective zones. Between the efforts of the Calcutta School Book Society and the Calcutta School Society, Bengal had a number of schools in which English was taught. Capt. Doveton, General Claude Martin, David Hare, each the proud progenitor of well-known institutions, two of which exist even today, gave their all to further the cause of English education. Influential Gentoos like Raja Radhakanta Dey and Raja Ram Mohan Roy helped David Hare to found the 'Vidyalaya', the nucleus of the Hindu College that later became the Presidency College of Calcutta. The Calcutta Madrassa had been founded in 1751 by Warren Hastings with the laudable object of qualifying 'sons of Mahomedan gentlemen for responsible and lucrative offices in the state.' The Benares Sanskrit College was founded by Jonathan Duncan in 1792. Even earlier, a Bengali had started a private institution to teach English to the boys of the Holy City. At Poona, a college of Hindu learning was started at about the same period.

The East India Company, however, took time to conquer their hesitancy to assume responsibility for the education of the native. When they did, an annual sum of one lakh of rupees was provided out of the revenue to serve the dual purpose of encouraging Oriental learning and the Western Sciences. The clause in the Act of 1813 was, however, circumscribed by the first education despatch in 1814 which stressed the need of encouraging 'learned natives'. This raised the ire of those 'gentoos' who had already been won over to the side of Western education. The intelligentsia were soon torn between the Anglicists and the Orientalists. The representative of the former was Raja Ram Mohan Roy[2] who believed that the Indian sloth and prejudice could only be cured by the ferment of Western rationalism, while the pillars of the Hindu Society, in reaction to the missionary

efforts at conversion, remained Orientalists. Not that the one lakh of rupees was being properly spent to encourage the latter, but their faith was enough.

It would be interesting at this stage to have some idea of the state of educational affairs in the country, in so far as they remained unaffected by the efforts of missionaries, the eccentrics and the officers of the East India Company. We have Sir Thomas Munroe's survey of Madras, the Bombay Government's for Bombay, and Mr Adams' for Bengal. The Madras figure of student population in the native schools was one out of 67 and the Bombay figure was one out of 133, of the general population. Mr Adams says that there were one hundred thousand native schools in Bengal imparting education in the three R's. Most certainly, the standard of instruction was not very high, but its lowness was compensated by its nearness to the soil and all that had sprung from it in the shape of myths and legends. It satisfied the needs of the people, dictated as they were by the rudimentary rural and town economy of the period. All the education surveys of the period, however, revealed a disintegrating process which the collector of Bellary, in the Madras Presidency, ascribed to 'the competition of foreign goods, the movement of troops, and the substitution of European for native rule which, despite a less rigorous enforcement of the revenue had impoverished the country.' Archdeacon Firminger writes that in the England of 1818 for one child who had the opportunity of education three were left entirely ignorant. But contrast is no consolation; we know that the Indian social economy was already being shaken to its roots, and the fruits were becoming diseased and fewer in number. Not even the later solicitude of Lord Hardinge for the revival of the 'maktabs' and 'pathsalas' could undo the mischief that had been done. It had already been late. The government just went on establishing Sanskrit colleges in Calcutta, Agra, Delhi, and

purchasing Oriental classics for public libraries.

The two despatches of 1829 and '30 betrayed the beginnings of a new attitude of the Company towards the education of natives. The first merely contained the wish that their education should be such as to qualify them for higher stations in the civil government. Be it noted that by this time civil government was well established and business in the commercial houses and banking concerns was flourishing without competition. The 1830 despatch uttered the theory of filtration. In the words of the despatch: "The system of education by a thorough study of the English language could be placed within the reach of a very small portion of the Indian population but the intelligent Indians who had been thus educated might as teachers in Schools or Colleges or as translators and writers of useful books contribute in an eminent degree to the more general extension among their countrymen of those accomplishments which they themselves had gained and might communicate in some degree to the native literature and to the minds of the native community that improved spirit which it is hoped that they themselves will have imbued from the influence of European ideas and sentiments." Well might the natives say: 'Thy will be done in less than fifty years.' The long sentence quoted above offers the educational key to our culture. It contains the essence of class-education as opposed to mass-education. Mayhew writes that the Government which so far back originated the theory and backed it in practice "must be held to deserve a beating." His comment deserves quotation in full. "For, by so doing, it encouraged the separation of mass from class, town from country, western from eastern modes of thought and life, to which India, left to herself, has always been too prone. It established the idea that education is a luxury, an investment perhaps also for the thrifty, but an investment in which privileged classes will receive most assistance

from the state. It also obscured the truth that the education of the people of India means nothing if it does not mean the development of the cultural instincts and the raising of the material level of all classes of those peoples."[3] Now, Mayhew is the honest British democrat who, believing in education, is ashamed of the class-bias of the despatch of 1830. He is, of course, aware of the dangers if India were left to herself. But he makes the document bear an excess of responsibility. If by 1830 the country had been impoverished, the foreign civil government had started functioning, cottage industries had decayed, zamindaries had been created to collect rent, and the old merchant middle class had disintegrated under the pressure of English business-interest, then there was no alternative left but to create a black-coated salariat to support foreign rule and foreign trade. The filtration theory was only a reflection of the objective situation. If it reeked more openly of class-prejudice than any address of the Rugby Arnold, or of a Mandarin in China, or of an Indian publicist lamenting over the problem of unemployment consequent upon a lower standard of examinations, it was mostly because of the consciousness of the fact that the class in this case was an artificial one. The governing authority knew that a substitute class had to be raised and groomed by a highly selective process of breeding. England and China had a middle class; the E.I. Company suffered from the double burden of creating one and educating it. And then, we too were willing. Why also blame poor Thomas Babington Macaulay, who only carried out, in better English, the same infiltration tactics among the willing ones? Said he: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinions, morals and intellect." To this class was consecrated the task of refining the vernacu-

lars and enriching them with scientific terms borrowed from the West. The first part of the task has since been duly fulfilled—even the tallest among the Anti-Imperialists profess English reactions, and the most radical among the younger nationalist writers are only refining 'vernacular' crudities into English syntax and attitudes, either in the light of T. S. Eliot or of D. H. Lawrence minus their insight into Nature and problems of life. Of course, for Philosophy, the authorities felt that vernacular was enough, though our eminent philosophers have not yet obliged them by writing in their own tongue or in Hindi or in Sanskrit. Thus, modern Indian education has been a partial consummation of Macaulay's dreams. The second part has only been recently undertaken. But most of the science teachers' reactions are still English. They have a feeling that for Science, English, failing which German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, any European language is more fitted than any Indian language. These gentlemen may or may not be scientists, but they certainly are no philologists, and very probably, they cannot express themselves in their mother-tongue.

We will not go into the details of the controversy between Raja Ram Mohan and his opponents in the matter of education. He was a great man, perhaps the greatest Indian of the nineteenth century. But, sociologically, his contributions must needs be put in the proper historical perspective. As noted before, the series of legislation known as Permanent Settlement had begun its work in creating a leisured class not hostile to the culture of their creators. Clerks and subordinate civil servants with some knowledge of the English language were in demand. In 1837 Persian as court-language was abolished and English slowly substituted. Lord Hardinge solemnly resolved in 1844 that 'in every possible case a preference shall be given in the selection of cadidates for public employment' to those educated

in the English schools.

Once the passport to power and prestige was duly drafted and signed, Raja Ram Mohan could only help the general issues to crystallize on other planes.[4] By the middle of the century the die was cast. English education spread rapidly in Bengal, Bombay and Madras. In 1852, the three presidencies showed 9,893 pupils receiving English education out of a school-going population of 25,372.

Once more. Both English education and 'landmindedness' were imparted *after* the liquidation of indigenous trade and commerce and the cottage industries. It was the newly created gentry living on land or on the new commerce who took to English education. Those who suffered from the disappearance of cottage-industries found the English education in the cities too expensive and the pathsalas and maktabs dying of neglect; so they lapsed into illiteracy. Those who made money by acting as agents of foreign commercial concerns became landlords in their turn, settled in the city and fathered the Calcutta Baboo culture, the sampler of Bengali culture up till the end of the nineteenth century. The new land settlement and the frustration of commerce-capital went together to form the social incentive of English education on the part of the Indian. Bengal illustrates this thesis better than any other province in Northern India. No wonder that the Government were duly impressed by the avidity of the Bengalis for English education. The needs of the civil government were an additional feature.

If in Bombay an average Arts graduate has not the intense hankering for jobs that we find in Bengal, it is not solely due to the Poona Brahmins, the efforts of the Bombay Education Society, the great advocacy of Elphinstone on behalf of Oriental learning, on the one hand, nor can it be traced to the lesser intimacy of the province with the central administration, on the other.

In his famous minute, Elphinstone had written that "it would be surely a preposterous way of adding to the intellectual treasures of a nation to begin by the destruction of its indigenous literature; I cannot but think that the future attainments of the natives will be increased in extent as well as in variety by being, as it were, engrafted on their previous knowledge and imbued with their own original and peculiar character." These noble words cut no ice, except among a group of ardent nationalists in Maharashtra whose descendants are even now paying for their knowledge of national 'intellectual treasures' in terms of clerkship and all that it means. Barring this community, Bombay is not excessively job-minded. The special reasons are these: the peculiar system of land-tenure in Bombay offered the facilities which were ably nursed by the strong merchant class among the Parsees and Gujaratis to provide a greater outlet for the youthful talents in the shape of business careers than the training in English schools for government jobs of the lower cadre could ever do. In Bombay, the hold of foreign 'Houses' upon the native traders was less, and could be resisted and supplanted by the strong merchant communities of Bhatias and Parsees. The Maharashtrians had no such class, however. Industrial capital soon developed among the Parsees and the Bhatias, in fact sooner than anywhere else in India. It fortified the commerce-capital better, and allowed Indian finance-capital to emerge for the first time in India. So men and women of Bombay took to English education in a way different from the Bengali. The resulting differences in culture have not been insignificant.

Once the Universities were started in the three Presidencies, belief in English education became almost blind. Manners followed education. But the excess generated a reaction. Michael Madhusudan was a case in point. He wrote English, spoke English, dreamed in

English. But he gave up English verses to produce magnificent poetry in his mother tongue. Between 1850 and 1885 a noticeable change was occurring in the attitude of the new middle class. The Baboo was cutting his teeth. The spread of English education was only making the educated despair of being treated as equals of their masters in offices. According to the report of the Indian Education Commission of 1882, 1495 First Arts, 548 B.A.'s, and 112 M.A.'s came out of the Calcutta University between 1857 and 1871. In the next ten years, the corresponding figures were 2,666, 1,037, and 284. The best of the graduates got government jobs, but the majority were not sure. Besides, the superior Imperial Services were not open to them. The discontent led to the agitation for throwing them open.[5] Petitions and memorandums were submitted by various bodies, with the British Indian Association at their head. Magazines and platforms were vigorously utilized. At last three Indian Civilians came in. One of them, the late Surendra Nath Banerjee, had to leave the service soon, and became the father of Indian Nationalism. He was ably assisted by the famous barrister M. Ghosh who had failed in the I.C.S., and Lal Mohan who had failed to get returned to Parliament. Before Bankim Chandra wrote his *Ananda Math,* which contains the Bande Mataram, he had quarrelled with his immediate superior, Mr Buckland. Similarly, Dinabandhu Mitra, the author of *Neel Darpan,* "The Mirror of the Indigo", for the publication of which the Rev. Mr Long was sent to prison, was a Postal Superintendent. The tradition of the patriot-literary magistrate in Bengal is old;[6] it is still going strong. Bengali literature owes a great deal to the disgruntled Babu. The fact of the matter about him was this; he was meant to be a clerk with the possession of a fair smattering of the English language, a good handwriting, and loyal manners, but he started reading John Stuart Mill, Burke, Milton, Paine, Godwin, Comte, Kant, Hegel, and

the rest of them. This was clearly not in the bargain. Macaulay intoned in 1853 that the Indian public's mind would outgrow the system it had fostered, demand better government, even European institutions. He was not sure whether such a day would come. "But never will I attempt to avert or retard it. Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history." The demand did not take long to come, but its satisfaction was a different story. In the meanwhile, Macaulay triumphed, and Indians showed their 'scholarship' in English in their fulminations against English prejudices towards India, which, of course, meant the new elite. Really, the standard of expression in the weekly and monthly periodicals of those days was so literary that by its side the style of our best authors in English looks journalese. So far so good, but the new class was also really behaving like Oliver Twist.

In this period, Indians suddenly became conscious of their past. Rajah Rajendra Lal Mitter, Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar, Indraji and others followed in the footsteps of Wilkins, Jones, Du Perron, Colebrooke, Wilson, Max Muller, Prinsep and Cunningham. The rationalist Bankim took to the Bhagwat Geeta, and wrote on Lord Krishna in the spirit of Renan on Christ. Articles appeared on the military prowess of the ancient Hindus, their medicine, astronomy and philosophy. The certificates of Goethe, Schopenhauer, and Emerson were shown with pride. India was great when Great Britain was steeped in Cimmerian darkness and Europe was a jungle. Of course, none cared about the *social* history of the Indian people in those days. There is little indication of any recognition of the *social*[7] forces that had destroyed the glorious period. Either it was the work of Providence or the fault of the Muslims! At this time, an old Purana was unearthed in which Queen Victoria's name occurred, her rule blessed, and the Indo-British connexion stated as the will of Providence.* The spirit

behind research and the limitations of its scope were set by middle-class romanticism, even when the method was learned beyond cavil. The newt *literati* were in search of moral support from the past. A parallel phenomenon was the birth and growth of the Historical School in Germany in reaction to Napoleon's regime. But the analogy need not be ridden to death. For one, the Prussians had the Junker caste, and for another, a genuine *bourgeoisie* was rising there on the ashes of the feudal order. The results were naturally different: there the Prussian State, here the Indian National Congress.

A deeper reaction than that of the Babus and the scholars came in the wake of a religious revival. It was more than a reaction, it was almost a revulsion. Elsewhere we have dealt with this subject and shown its nationalistic affiliations. Here we can only note the educational aspects of the question. In Bengal, Bhudeb Mukhopadhyaya, Raj Narayan Bose, Kali Prasanna Sinha, Maharaja Radhakanta, Rajah Kamal Krishna, Raja Kali Krishna, the Burdwan, the Natore and the Dinajpore Raj families, and various others among the old and the new rich, became patrons of Oriental learning and manners. They dressed themselves like Indians, supported a large numper of dependants, and were surrounded by Pandits. All of them, barring Raj Narayan who was not rich, endowed Sanskrit Pathsalas, and made Pandits read or edit Sanskrit texts and translate them into Bengali for popularizing them. The late Bhoodeb Chandra defended the Hindu social system in the first sociological treatise on Indian Society written by an Indian; and Raj Narayan, the beef-eater[8] of earlier days, lectured on the "superiority of Hindooism over all other forms of Faith" under the auspices of the National Society. Raj Narayan inspired Naba Gopal Mitra in founding the Hindu Mela and a national paper, but could not make him favour a democratic form of government. The 'National Naba-Gopal' thought that India was destined

to be religious and that dictatorial rule was most suited to India.[9] Bhoodeb, the first Indian Inspector of Schools, did not care much for representative government and the like, and remained an orthodox gentleman of some charm. Another well-known writer of this school, Akshay Chandra Sircar, went so far as to say (1874) that Islam was the real difficulty in the national unity of India and that India was not a nation.[10] Bankim Chandra, the first graduate, was an extraordinary man, and not simply a first class man of letters; he was a genuine radical. It was he who advocated the use of the Bengali, who realized the plight of the masses, and pleaded for equality (in an essay subsequently withdrawn),[11] saw through the pretensions of the new *bourgeoisie*, and wanted democratic forms of government; and yet in his scheme of things the Muslims did not come in. Whatever the Hindu defenders of Bankim may say, his novels do not show many traces of affection for the Muslim. He and Akshay Chandra lived on the opposite banks of the Ganges; they were poles apart in most things; yet they met on the common ground of an anti-Islamic attitude. Similarly, Sisir Kumar Ghosh, the elder of the Patrika Ghoses, was a good democrat, in parts. His writings are worth studying even today. There is hardly anything in the Congress ideology today, right from passive resistance, economic nationalism, the role of the panchayats, down to anti-imperialism, which cannot be found there.[12] And yet, he too, contradicted himself. He did not notice the contradictions; he probably resolved them by his Vaishnavism, as Bankim did through the use of the Sannyasin in his novels. If the radicals were middle class in their moorings, and completely indifferent, if not hostile, to the Muslims and to the masses, it was difficult for others to realise that they too were sons of the soil, equal to the Hindus in their common subjection and impartial poverty. Such radicalism could be boiled down to the protection of Hinduism, the

education of India to the land of the Hindus, that of the Hindus with the middle classes who would not remain clerks and Deputy Collectors in the Subordinate Services but would go up higher and higher until they reached the ante-rooms of the Belvedere. This legacy of Hindu resurgence and middle-class domination became the mortmain of the Congress. It was invested in Nationalism; and the interest is Pakistan. The mischief started in Bengal, and has lasted longest in Bengal.

But the Muslims soon realized that English education was leading the Hindus to power and being rationalized into a doctrine of Hindu nationalism. The Muslim leaders reached the above conclusion first in Bengal, because English education, English domination over culture, English stranglehold over the economic life of the people, English creation of Hindu zamindars came first in that province. The Calcutta Madrassa had been established by Warren Hastings for creating clerks and officers. When Lord Bentinck recruited the majority of judges from the Muslims, the Hindus complained against his partiality in the pages of a newspaper.[13] But it was clear that the Muslims were not taking full advantage of the English classes in the Anglo-Persian department of the Madrassa which had been opened soon after English became the official language. Only four Muslims in all became Junior Scholars between 1826 and 1851.[14] In 1852, Lord Ellenborough in his evidence before the House of Commons wanted two chambers of Legislature for India, the one for the Hindus and the other for the Muslims. Halliday thought that the real objection to the representation of Indians in a Legislative body was that the Hindus and the Muslims were so divided. Amery & Co. are so unoriginal. On the other hand, Peary Mitter reasoned against separate representation; the Hindu Mahasabha could not better his arguments. So, naturally, in 1853, when stipends to Muslim scholars in the Madrassa were being abolished, there was

a mammoth meeting in Calcutta. Be it said to the credit of the organizers of the meeting that the objection it lodged was not directed against favouritism towards the Hindus, but towards attempts at the religious conversion of the natives, Hindus and Muslims alike, through the encouragement of English education. As yet, religious fervour counted. But by 1856, it yielded place to the forces with which we are familiar today. In that year, the National Mahomedan Association, and in 1863, the Mahomedan Literary Society were founded, all in Calcutta, by the English scholars among the Muslims. Abdul Lateef, the first Muslim Junior Scholar, in a paper on Muslim education in Bengal read in Calcutta in 1868, said: "Mahomedan education can never cease to have a strongly marked feature of political interest, which will force itself on the notice of all who desire to make the enlightenment of the Indian races the handmaid of loyalty and devotion to the British power. I beg you to bear in mind that it is no longer open to debate whether respectable Mahomedans are willing to have their children imbued with the principles of a sound, healthy education." Mr Abdul Lateef wanted a separate College for the Muslims. Sir Sayyid Ahmad's Aligarh College established in 1872 was the concrete realization of Mr Lateef's dreams. Once it got going, the Aligarh movement became conterminous with the history of English education among Muslims in India. Haji Mahommad Mohsin's heavily endowed trust for Muslim students came into operation the next year. It was clear that Muslim education in English was at last on its legs. Justice Mahmood,[15] the son of Sir Sayyid, collected these comparative figures: College-going Muslims in 1881-2 —Bengal 106, Madras 30, N.W.P. 29, the Punjab 13, Oudh 7, Bombay 7: High School Muslim population— Bengal 3,831, Madras 117, Bombay 118, the Punjab 91. In the period between 1858-1893, Calcutta University Muslim graduates numbered 290, Bombay 30, Madras

29, the Punjab 102, and Allahabad 102. The year 1881-2 is an important year in the history of Muslim education. The National Mahomedan Association of Calcutta submitted a memorial to Lord Ripon in which the circumstances leading to the decay of the Muslim position were mentioned, and a demand was made for a new policy of the Government in regard to Muslim education. The newness consisted in separate educational facilities. The Central Government was only too willing to oblige. It referred the Muslims to the result of examinations as qualification for higher jobs, but mentioned the High Courts, Local Governments and local officers who could "redress the inequality", obviously without regard to intellectual merit. The subordinate officers were accordingly impressed upon to do their best. But it seems that the Muslim leaders knew that nothing would be achieved. In 1883, Mr M. Yusuf was compelled to claim 'separate representation' for his community in local self-government, on two grounds: (1) education can only be acquired by practice, (2) "When there is party spirit and angry feeling between the two classes of people, it is necessary to reserve power for the representation of the minority." But Mr Yusuf would remain content with reservation of seats for any minority by religion. He was, however, a democrat compared to such worthies as Kristo Das Pal and Maharaja Tagore who opposed the introduction of local self-government. He even wanted votes for women.[16] This queer mixture of democracy with reserved representation continued to be the feature of Muslim attitude in every sphere of demand, until Mr Jinnah prescribed Pakistan as the panacea.

From 1885 onwards the progress of education in English became rapid. Two events with deep social significance took place about this time: (1) The Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act. By this the loopholes in the Act of 1859, which had given occupancy rights to tenants who had cultivated the same land continuously for 12

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years, were closed, and the tenant, to enjoy occupancy rights as under the previous Act, could cultivate any land in the same village for 12 years. The result was the legal recognition of what had been happening for some time past—viz., the growth of a class intermediate between the actual tillers of the soil and the Zamindar, in other words, the Kulaks of Bengal. They soon developed a thirst for education and pressed for services, after sub-letting their land in turn to the lower tenants. The importance of the Act consisted in the breach of the first line of defence of the newly privileged and in the greater ease of circulation than before. Since then there has been no turning back on English education, until Tagore and Sir Asutosh Mookerji revolutionized the whole outlook of education in India.

(2) On the 28th December, 1885, the first sitting of the Indian National Congress took place in Bombay under the presidency of Mr W. C. Bonnerji, the famous barrister of Calcutta. The first voice heard in that hall, which was that of a Sanskrit College, was Mr Hume's. Four objects of the Congress were defined by the President: Promotion of personal contacts between 'the more earnest workers' in India's cause throughout the Empire; eradication of race, creed and provincial prejudices to consolidate the development of national sentiment that had begun under Lord Ripon; the recording after full discussion of the opinions of 'the educated classes' on some important social questions; and the determination of political action by 'native politicians' in the next year's sitting. Nine resolutions were passed. The first wanted a Royal Commission on Indian Administration, and the second the abolition of the India Council. (Sir Stafford Cripps was pleasantly surprised when he was told of the demand in 1942. Mr Amery was, of course, quietly filling up its vacancies when Cripps' mission was being proposed.) The third demanded elected members in existing councils and the creation of three new bodies;

the fourth proposed simultaneous examination for the I.C.S.; the fifth and sixth criticized military expenditure; the seventh protested against the annexation of Upper Burma; the eighth ordered the despatch of the Congress resolution to different political associations for further discussion; and the ninth fixed the next venue in Calcutta. Before Tilak, no material change was effected in the main attitude of the Congress demands as embodied in the above resolutions. The social composition of the Congress remained upper middle-class, and naturally all the demands were couched in the cultured language of highly educated people, distinguished as lawyers and steeped in the constitutional laws and practices of England. The infiltration theory in education was working in driblet,[17] but inexorably. With the introduction of the Tilak School in the Congress, the general composition became middle-class, of course, in the same specious sense of the term. The composition underwent a further change after 1919 when Gandhiji took up the reins and broadened the basis of the organization to include the lower middle class. The middle-middle class took to responsive co-operation, or Swarajist tactics as it was newly baptized, but without breaking with the Congress. This withdrawal of the intelligentsia from the sphere of political agitation into that of sulking co-operation created a vacuum between the classes which all institutions abhor. In the mean time, Commerce-Capital had received a tremendous impetus during the War, and one branch got a chance of evolving into Industrial Capital and throwing up at last a genuine middle class. The new *bourgeoisie* felt baulked by the British competition. It swung over to the side of the new Congress. The second agency for filling the vacuum was the old Hindu nationalism in a new garb. Now that the Khilafat movement had failed, revulsion flowed back to the Hindu Mela ideology. Tilak too had a share in it, but he died prematurely. The educated Congress-

men or nationalists of any other persuasion would not openly declare with 'national' Naba Gopal that Islam was the chief barrier to India's nationalism, but they would speak in another language, *e.g.* dangers of vivisection, menace to the Fundamental Cultural Unity of India, and so on. The capitalists in the Congress rank were all Hindus, very religiously minded. Religion, as in Europe, squared well with rising Capitalism, although one may deplore the absence of any 'rational' ethics. The devotion of the capitalists to the Mahatma could ill square with rationalism. The result is that today, with the incursion of the lower middle class and of the merchant and the industrial capitalists, a premium has been given to definite anti-intellectual tendencies in our political thinking. It seems that the old trickle of culture that the infiltration theory of English education had released has dried up, and that some supreme act of self-immolation before a God unknown is necessary to make a fresh spring of life flow. From now on, nothing but Basic Education paying the utmost regard to the objective situation would do. But the fate of Basic Education hangs in the balance today. The administration has been preoccupied with other things during the War; and although the Sargent Report pays lip-service to it, there is no chance of ever relating India's educational system to the needs of India's concrete social situation unless India comes to her own in every field of action.

But a few things had happened to our educational ideals before the Wardha scheme was sponsored by Gandhiji and Dr Zakir Hussain. It is really astonishing that the Supreme Poet of India should also be a great pedagogue, one of her very greatest.[18] As early as 1890, Tagore had violently reacted against the abstraction of the prevalent system of education and compared the Indian educated with a man on crutches, worse off than the unlettered savage who at least knew the use of his limbs. The poet had never taken kindly to the discipline

of the schools and had played the truant all along. So when in 1901 he settled in his father's estate at Shanti-Niketan he got his life's chance to give effect to the various ideas that he had been maturing. His idea was to 'catch them young'. Children in contact with nature and in co-operation with their own group would learn to feel and do rightly. Self-reliance and hardihood would be the meed of their initiative. They would learn through their mother tongue and thus think correctly and concretely. There would be no bar to self-expression. Once feeling and curiosity were trained, the boys would study nature by the latest methods. The third phase of the rhythm would be awareness of India, her past through researches, her present through living links with the economic life of the people, and her future as a chief contributor to the progress of humanity and to its unity which the Indian youth should religiously seize. The Poet's pedagogy was not poetic, nor was it a throw-back to the forests; it was very rigorous, very modern, and very comprehensive. He would be satisfied with nothing less than the education of the whole man. He was a great believer in the Gestalt-Psychology, and would often practise it in his classes with the children. Being fundamentally a musician he would make the beats of life suit its rhythms. Such a programme could hardly be realized in full in a subject country, but more has been accomplished in Shanti-Niketan in the way of a genuine national renaissance than in any other educational institution of India.

And yet, Shanti-Niketan has not brought about a socially revolutionary change in the country. To the regret of the Poet, it was falling in line with other, official universities. Nobody was disappointed that it was not producing civilians, but the country expected that it would at least produce their victims. Shanti-Niketan, in solitary grandeur, would, if it could, stand out of the political movement.[19] Then again, many

people felt that it was just a poet's experiment, his Leela, and nothing more. Sri-Niketan, with its rural reconstruction programme, the ring of Co-operative Societies, the Melas, the folk-songs and plays, looked like an effort, and an effort from the top at that, a *tour de force*. Somehow, people felt that it did not strike roots, though rootedness was the very aim of the Poet's endeavour. Rightly or wrongly, people suspected that Shanti-Niketan was grounded on the initial assumption that individual will and capacity could outstrip the material context. Its neglect in the life-time of the Poet,[20] the patronizing and meaningless solicitude towards it after his demise, the stupendous indifference towards its ideals and their occasional misconstruction, are no doubt so many pointer-readings of our low standard of values. True also that neglect, pity, indifference are a homage which the spurious pay to the authentic. Still the fact remains to be explained why only two lakhs of rupees were collected for the Tagore Memorial in the two years of hectic profiteering, while much more than a crore poured into a most laudable welfare scheme, the Kasturba Memorial Fund, in a few weeks. And yet, India loves Tagore, loves education and takes Shanti-Niketan to be a sacred National Trust. There is nothing wrong with Shanti-Niketan either; only it appears to be not held by the frame, not seized by the immediate context. And it is the immediate that is the dramatic. One cannot blame a culture so inured to epic laziness for desiring the excitment of a drama.

There was another valuable experiment, the National Council of Education in Bengal, in the first decade of this century. Starting as a protest against the Bengal Partition, a band of patriots and scholars wanted to start a University on which Curzon's fiats and Risley's circulars would not be binding. Aurobindo Ghosh was its Principal, and his staff was brilliant. Gradually, however, the educational ardour was dis-

placed by extremist political fervour; the Arts department was closed, the teachers went away in search of better pay, and the technological section developed into the Technological College at Jadavpur. It is a fine institution, but the original inspiration seems to have languished.

But modern Indian education in India is conterminous with Sir Asutosh Mookerjee. For a full quarter of a century he ruled the intellectual life of Bengal and the destiny of her youth. His influence was felt throughout the land. He was the un-official Vice-Chancellor of every Indian University. He was more than a pedagogue. We do not think that he had any cut and dried educational theory. But he summed up all our educational ideals, raised our intellectual dignity, and enhanced our self-confidence to pursue knowledge in all its branches and hold our own against the best in the world. Not that we have produced very many of the best, but even those rare few whom we have, drew their inspiration from his encouragement. His assistance was not confined to the Bengalis alone. For some years, out of seven University Professors at Calcutta not one was a Bengali. Under him the Calcutta University became the University of Asia. Professors in other centres of learning in India would receive their communications from European and American Universities addressed C/o The Calcutta University. All this is well known and has been duly praised, perhaps over-praised. But what has been ignored is the fact that by his educational work he touched our society intimately and affected our culture vitally. He is alleged to have lowered the standard of all examinations, from the Matriculation onwards, and thus created the problem of unemployment. On the credit side, he spread the love of research, raised the status, not simply of Bengali, but of Pushtu even, encouraged the study of classics and Indology, and introduced Bengali in the University curriculum as a subject

of serious study and in the schools as a medium of instruction. What is the social significance of his deeds and misdeeds?

The first series of actions resulted in a very large increase in the school and college-going population. Roundabout 1918-20, the proportion of scholars seeking to profit by college education under the auspices of the Calcutta University to the total number of school-students in Bengal was the highest in the whole world. Naturally, their number, and it was ever on the increase, frightened the vested interests who spared no pains to declare them unfit. Journalists, provincial Governments, employers, and members of the liberal professions, lawyers, doctors, bemoaned and condemned the lowering of the ancient standard. The critics probably did not know that about the same period, at least in three independent countries elsewhere, Great Britain, France, and the U.S.A., the same lament was being voiced in reports on their educational progress. They brushed aside in a superior manner the consideration that the reduction in the general level, if any, might as well be the cumulative consequence of sixty years' teaching through a foreign medium. They completely ignored the fact that this large quantity was throwing up a scholar or two of high quality who would raise the status of India before the world. But entrenched privilege never fumbles for reason to hide its own fears. The fact of the matter was this: Young men from social groups which had no previous trade or traffic with education were now gambling with it. These groups were 'outsiders'. Peasants were stinting themselves to send their young folk to schools and colleges. This social phenomenon was interpreted as the naive love of degrees among the unfit who were being molly-coddled by Sir Asutosh. In reality, it only meant the bankruptcy of the entire social economy that had been foisted upon the country. The system of land-ownership, divested

as it was of any interest in the land apart from battening upon its surplus or differentials, was reaching its crisis with dwindling rent-receipts and the waxing number of the landless. The cultural consequence was the breach in the barrier of educational costs and privileges. All must knock at the gate; and of those who found themselves inside none, not even the plucked B.A. would like to go back to his slum-relations in the villages to feel out of tune there, now that his hopes had been lifted, his horizon enlarged by his stay in Calcutta, by incessant talks in tea-shops, and by lectures in the class room. In case he went back, he would eventually sink, or be swallowed up in the family, land-intrigues and village-gossip, but he would lose respect for those who had monopolized the fruits of the earth. The Deputy Magistrate would no longer fascinate him, nor would the Zamindar and the Police Sub-Inspector hold any terror for him. Above all he would want to marry the girl of his choice—though he would end by marrying the choice of his parents. Meanwhile, he would pour out his soul in verse and music. This demolition of barriers between the middle-middle and the lower middle classes, and the opening out a small breach for the tenant classes to come up through education were no small changes for a hermetically sealed society. Sir Asutosh effected them and in a sense created the conditions for the resulting sense of maladjustment. But the sphere of élite had suddenly enlarged, and with it the possibility of a still quicker mobility.

Another important sociological consequence of Sir Asutosh's lack of discrimination in granting high degrees has been the turning away of the minds of our scholars from safe and fat berths to the acceptance of a life of risks and uncertainties. The social gain is immeasurable, and compensates for all personal inconveniences. So long as the support was sure and prospects secure, the only virtue demanded of the incumbents was con-

formity to rules of service. Among the large number of Government officers in the educational services, or of teachers in private colleges, a microscopic minority were interested in equipping themselves further with advanced knowledge. Scientific research among the P.E.S. was nil, with two or three exceptions. The reason was not so much the absence of a research-atmosphere as the absence of a need for research in well-coigned seats of advantage. To put it bluntly, there was no economic incentive to research, and no incentive can be half so effective with teachers as preferment. Seniority and recruitment from Great Britain had made it all unnecessary. On the other hand, in the last thirty-five years, among the new entrants to services in Universities, and even in private colleges, a greater proportion of research-scholars is noticeable. Whether the quality of teaching has improved or not is an entirely different matter. Given the usual wire-pulling and other influences, a great premium has been put since Sir Asutosh's regime upon some achievement as qualification for the holding of educational posts. If Sir Asutosh had merely lowered the initial barrier, he could have been blamed for throwing the unworthy to the wolves that were baying at the door. But along with the opening out of the arena of competition, he intensified its quality, and along with intensification, he showed to the intrinsically worthy that the tension could be reduced by their own scholarly efforts. In fact, what Tilak is held to have done in politics Sir Asutosh did for education. Both proved that mendicancy by a large number of people was not a business proposition. Both taught young Indians to stand on their feet and keep their heads high. Both gave a chance to quantity to throw up quality and thus be transformed by it.

We have previously coupled Sir Asutosh's name with Tagore's. The way that was paved by the former made possible the latter's influence to spread far and

wide. But for those 'worthless graduates' the recent tendencies of our literature would have been inconceivable. It is well known that Tagore has raised the level of competence and made it impossible for any literary endeavour to fall below a certain minimum. The very large number of minor artists who are filling up the pages of numerous magazines and publishing books of all kinds and types are mostly recruited from the graduates belonging to the lower middle class. So Sir Asutosh's achievement in the matter of circulation of the literary élite is clearly marked.

Other finer arts have also been invaded by the graduates. Formerly, painting and music were the preserve of the ne'er-do-well. Boys who could not get promotion from one class to another would be shunted off to an art-school. Musicians came from those for whom all hopes had been abandoned by their guardians. The situation has changed slightly for the better, artists are no longer just pariahs; illiteracy and plastic or musical abilities do no more go quite together in the public mind of today. The active revival of music, as demonstrated by the number of college students among its votaries and by the effort to create new forms, is certainly a sign of change. Even in matters relating to business, e.g. in Insurance, the influx of educated people has led to some expansion and a consequent heightening of standard. (Advertisements of Insurance Companies are the mainstay of many literary journals in Bengal.) If the snobbishness of the older types of graduates had not been thus broken by the new educational policy, all this would have been impossible. It is also a statistical conclusion that the craze of Bengali students for taking English degreees in humanistic studies perceptibly diminished in Sir Asutosh's regime, and the number of those desirous of availing themselves of opportunities for scientific research and technical studies offered by English, and particularly American

and German Universities, did show an upward tendency.

Along with the above, nobody coming to the Calcutta University staff from the Continent, America, or England dared ape Western manners. This nationalism in manners in other provinces is partly due to the recent political movement of Mahatma Gandhi. In Bengal, it is older and can be traced to the earlier Swadeshi movement of Bengal. But Sir Asutosh's and Tagore's examples were better than any precept. Behind the examples was the economic fact that the middle class young men, even of the lower stratum, now could and would go to foreign Universities, and when they would come back they could ill afford to live in any style above their own. Bengal's case is typical of India; only the time-lag is a sore and causes annoyance.

What are the cultural consequences of the progress of English education among Muslims? The effects are similar, because the main outlines of the context are Indian, and, therefore, common. Yet, a few differences may be noted and their nature analysed. The Muslim students in the Punjab and the U.P. are still recruited from the upper middle class on account of the high costs of education. Stipends and scholarships have not yet opened the flood-gates. True that an Aligarh boy does no longer stand out by virtue of his office, manners and dress, but his standard is any day higher than that of his counterpart in Dacca, which city is commonly held to be the centre of a Muslim region. In the Western province of Pakistan, a Muslim student, say, of the Government College at Lahore, can only be beaten by his Sikh class fellow in the quality of his dress and out-of-pocket expenses. In the Lucknow and the Allahabad Universities only the Momin Muslim students are avowedly poor. Agra has not yet developed a tradition of scholarly expenses. This middle-middle class Muslim student community must have jobs, in the search of which they come into conflict with the Hindu students. Muslim

young men who come from well-to-do classes or the poorer sections become atheists, radicals, rationalists, materialists and Communists, almost to a man. They soon throw off their lumber, and skip over social stages with the ease of a swallow. Whatever is happening to modern Urdu literature is at their instance. Probably, it is unfair to them even to suggest that these Muslim young men hold the key to the future culture of India. They have to be 'Muslim' in compliance with the Government rules and as a concession to their birth and to the prejudice of their Hindu friends who shall find the Muslim in them. The truth is that the Muslim radical students are the freaks of today. Others are like their Hindu brethren, applicants for jobs, with a minor grievance or two.

In Bengal, the picture of Muslim education is a little different. There the number of Muslim students in schools and colleges has been the largest and the solicitude of the Government and the educational authorities the greatest. Special institutions, special stipends, special qualifications have been provided. Much of this treatment is due to the fact that Muslims form the majority community, and part of it to the fact that the new school- and college-going population come from the middle tenant classes who are mostly Muslim. A survey[21] of the economic condition of the Dacca University students shows the utter poverty of the Muslim boys. When they go out of the College or the University, they become job-hunters. The Government can satisfy some, but not all. The Hindus and the brethren in faith from other provinces stand in the way. Thus it is that among Bengali Muslims communalism and provincialism have developed simultaneously. Attempts have also been made to introduce Urdu, but they have not met with success. The Urdu spoken by the average Bengali Muslim is not even a slang. Only in a few Muslim families of Bengal Urdu is spoken at home.

But there the ladies are imported from outside Bengal, and boys sent to Aligarh or to the Doon School. Nothing is known of any solid contribution by the Bengali Muslim to Urdu literature except the effort to introduce Urdu words into Bengali texts by semi-literate Maulavis.[22] An eminent Bengali politician had once replied to an Englishman's criticism of his incorrect English grammar, "It is deliberate, Sir. When I cannot murder an Englishman, I can only murder his language." But this sublimated violence, though not yet given up, has been laughed out of court by the Muslim writers in Bengali who are as fond of the language of Bankim and Tagore as anybody else is in Bengal. Naturally, when a Muslim writes about his community, certain words used at home come in. But they need not be misfits; in fact, the account of their life and habits, when it is not a repetition of the life and habits of the Hindu petty *bourgeoisie,* should only enrich. Unfortunately, only a few novels, stories and poems by Muslim writers in Bengal have struck a new path. Which only proves that Muslim education in recent years is of the same sociological order of importance as Hindu education was in 1885. The Muslim society in Bengal, after getting rid of the incubus of the higher classes of the Murshidabad, Patna, Mysore, and Lucknow variety, is now entangled in the conflict between the middle-middle and the lower middle classes. A conjecture may, however, be hazarded that the circulation will be quicker here than among the Hindus. The number of farm-labourers in Bengal[23] is increasing fast, and the Muslim society stands to suffer most from it. The last Tenancy legislation has broken the fall, no doubt, but its full import cannot yet be realized. So, Muslim education in Bengal at least is going the way of all flesh in India. It is speeding up the circulation, but within the generic limits of the spurious class, called the Indian middle class. In other words the speed is not yet enough to

break the barriers of artificial interests. The effect of the Famine upon Muslims has been disastrous, and their education has grievously suffered. But up till now, the crisis has not occasioned any change in the educational outlook of the Muslim Government in Bengal, unless anti-Hindu policy is any outlook.

Hyderabad is a different story. It is Indian India, with a feudal aristocracy of jagirdars living in little islands of their own, with the masses, mostly Hindus, lapping the shores. Within these aits, the communal differences do not exist, and a cultural synthesis of some sort has already been achieved. When the Osmania University was started with Urdu as the medium of instruction even in the higher courses of Science, objection was raised by the Hindus that the attempt was non-social, nay anti-social. Yet, a fair amount of scholarship and research emanates from the Osmania. The writer has had it from an eminent Indian scientist that the students of that University, with the help of their Urdu textbooks, show as much grasp of science as any other group of Indian students who have a wider range of textbooks in English, French and German to draw upon. The same holds true of other branches of learning. Most of these graduates are being absorbed in the State services which have been expanding rapidly of late. Unemployment is not yet a problem for the Hyderabad Muslim graduate. Sociologically, only a bureaucracy is being formed there today. Being an Urdu-knowing caste with no roots in the life of the people, its cultural future is uncertain. At best, that culture can have the rare beauty of an orchid.

To put Aligarh after Osmania may look strange; but the novelty of Aligarh is no more there. The dream of Sir Sayyid and his brilliant group has no doubt materialized and the Muslim no more turns his gaze away from Western knowledge, materialism and manners. But one is not sure if from the sociological point of view the edu-

cational system of Aligarh materially differs from that of any other University, for the matter of that, even of the Hindu University. It has covered all the groups of the middle class from the topmost in the past to the lower ones of today, and stopped there. Its products have evidenced the same range and quality of (Muslim) nationalism and similar attitudes of elation and frustration. Its contributions to the Muslim community have been enormous. But has it really unturned the soil? From what one can see, it has only heightened the awareness of the Muslim middle class in a general way, broadened their vision forward and backward, and increased their mobility but within the ring. The Aligarh graduate betrays the same duality as the Calcutta or the Madras graduate does: he is divided between the East and West, the past and the future, and he is equally divorced from the people.

But the really interesting experiment in Muslim education is that which the Jamia Millia Islamia of Delhi has been silently conducting these twenty-five years. Under the guidance of its Vice-Chancellor, Dr Zakir Hussain, one of India's genuine educationists, it runs a residential University College, residential high and primary schools on up-to-date lines, a school-bank, a co-operative shop, a good library, an adult education centre, a teachers' training institute, the Urdu Academy, a book-depot, two magazines in Urdu, and a laboratory attached to which is a small chemical workshop. The scale is modest indeed, but the quality is good. Apart from the stress on the cultural heritage, the inculcation of the spirit of self-reliance and the building up of character-features, which are mentioned because they are more real here than elsewhere—the base of the Jamia pedagogy is that it is grounded upon the realities of social life in India. What is now known as Basic Education is an amended form of the Jamia instruction. That an institution sponsored by the Shaikh-ul-Hind,

Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Mahommad Ali, Dr Ansari and Gandhiji among others should be nationalist in spirit and deed is nothing strange. What gives it its uniqueness is its sociological angle. Nobody would suggest that even with that angle the Jamia has achieved anything revolutionary as yet, but as an Indian institution it has seized certain essentials of the Indian problem, and as a Muslim institution it has struck the right balance between modern Indian culture and the distinctive culture of Muslims in India. These merits seem to explain why the Jamia has no money to purchase a site and its first-rate teachers are so poorly paid.

Outside these main currents stand the numerous resolutions of Muslim Educational Conferences asking the Government and the Nawabs to protect and foster Muslim language and culture. Their significance is not so much educational as political. They only prove that the Muslim community is becoming self-conscious. The special aspects of Muslim culture are treated in the theological schools[24] by the Maulanas, most of whom of the U.P. are nationalists to the marrow of their bones, 'Congress-minded' in the official language.

The final social result of a hundred years of English education may now be indicated. The lower middle class is everywhere on the increase, but only up to a point. It is not a geometrical point, but a demographic boundary, broad and shifting. But the limit is determined, on one side, by the economic interests of the upper group which the earlier educational policy had partly served. But bigger social forces have at last enlarged that original set and increased the social mobility of the middle class. And where the mobility has increased, it is found that English education strengthens the last barrier between that expanding class and the masses.[25]

CHAPTER V

LITERATURE AND CLASS-EXPRESSION

So far we have been describing the objective situation in the context of which modern Indian Culture developed. Its essential resulting feature was the feeling of historical denial which the original stock of middle class that could most profit by contacts with the West now felt in its bones. The substitutes offered by the East India Company, and subsequently by the British Government, were land ownership and facilities for education in English. The facts that the first remained unconnected with agricultural productivity and the second with the main stream of Indian cultural traditions amply show that the alternatives were not socially sufficient in the sense that they could not create any genuine middle class. We know only too well that the zamindars became parasites on land and the graduates job-hunters. But in course of time their numbers, through sub-tenures and the extension of schools, increased, and quickened the social mobility. But since then nothing has happened to their structure *vis-a-vis* the people. The Indian middle class is still a spurious class and has no roots in the soil, however desperately it may try to strike them. Its inner bastions have fallen, but the no-man's land outside remains barricaded. The sense of impotence inside and fear of the people on the other side haunt its precarious existence and overhang its achievements in literature and fine arts. One could easily trace the slow growth of science and technology to the above social context, fixed as it was by the stoppage of the natural growth of commerce to industry, the fostering of land-mindedness and literary education. Literary efforts are our immediate concern, and science

has not entered into Indian Culture. The subject is vast, and we can only suggest the very broad outlines, omitting with regret the exact manner in which the sense of historical denial has actually affected literary workmanship and attitudes.

All the provincial languages which are creating a literature of their own today first came into prominence in the medieval period in the wake of the mystic disturbance described in the first chapter. That movement was mainly of the Bhakti cult and primarily protestant in spirit. So our provincial literatures started with the triple legacy of religious emotionalism, humanism, and doctrinal dissent in the name of Love, Intuition and Man. It is to be noted that those provinces, e.g. Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, which enjoyed these legacies more than others, were the first to take English literature with its inner soft core and rough husks of individuality unto their bosom. The historical truth is that the humanism and non-conformity that we find in modern Indian literature are not solely the gifts of the West. English literature only reduced the size of the letters in Love and Man, and reinforced the sentimentality. The former was a gain, but the latter has been a definite loss. Gain it was, because the little man had been swallowed in the triumphant assertion of Chandidas that Man was the supreme Truth; but only some gain, because in the absence of more concrete forms of equality the spiritual side of the Vaishnava conception of Humanity was extremely valuable.[1] A definite loss it has been in numerous ways, such as an unbalanced development of poetry at the expense of prose and criticism, the enlargement of the centres of weakness in the heart of Indian sentiments, (the sort of thing one finds in the description of Nellie's death in *Old Curiosity Shop,* only multiplied and repeated *ad nauseam)*, and a prudery that is as far away from India's literary traditions as it is from her moral and spiritual ones. Modern Indian

literature has invested its inheritance in British securities.

The spirit of non-conformity in Indian literature is as old as the Vedas. Even in the Brahmanas it raises its head, if not for long. It is there all over the earlier Pali and Jain literature. In the medieval period we have noticed its flowering at the green hands of the mystics. The Mangal-Kavyas of Bengal are very interesting in this way. They are paeans of gods and goddesses,[2] mostly of the earlier local variety, against whom the heroes and heroines revolt, but to whom they finally succumb. The hero in a number of cases is a merchant-prince[3] who can never escape the wrath of the god or the goddess he has offended. The merchants seemed to have adopted either a new religion, or a liberal, disrepectful and non-believing attitude towards the old.[4] And the older deities are cruel, very much so when they are women, as in the story of Behula and the Serpent-goddess. It also seems that the various sects were competing between themselves to enlist the support of the mercantile community or the Sresthis. Subsequent history does not record a synthesis or a hegemony, though later Vaishnavism captured the business-ethics fairly completely. The folk-literature proper, usually a cycle of local legends, has less to do with gods than with human beings in their daily love and living.[5] Occasionally, politics intervene, and we get glimpses of the doings of royal courts. Otherwise, local squabbles in which the hero and the heroine belong to opposite camps, even to forbidden castes and communities, are the main pre-occupations. These tales are so fresh and light by the side of the classics in their heavy armour, so heterodox in their ruling attitudes, and so deliciously secular within the remote ambit of the divine! Yet all this freshness disappeared. Hindi literature succumbed to an Alexandrine complexity of types of sentiments, of heroes and heroines.[6] Rhetoric displaced poetry, until

a Hindu poem became only a string of conceits.[7] Some excellent verses were no doubt being still produced, but their prosody is all that can be admired today. Its shackles still hang heavy upon the modern Hindi poets who are forced to suit their sentiments to the prescribed types of *chhanda* and *rasa*. The fondness with which modern Hindi poets cling to the well-worn categories and force their beloved into the prescribed types of 'nayikas' is pathetic. Modern Bengali poets thank their stars that they are the *parvenus* of the XIX Century. The Urdu poets with their Persian typology are less favourably placed. Their charter of freedom is very recent. But good use is being made of it.

Sentimentalizing of all manner is one of the chief characteristics of modern Indian Culture. In religion it is an anodyne, in politics it is nationalism, in economics it is Utopia-mongering, in poetry it is lyricism with a dash of the moral and the spiritual. Economics is mentioned[8] because recently the heroes of novels are all going back to the land and starting 'asrams' for the uplift of the masses. As in religion, so in other spheres; one part of this cloying sweetness comes from the Indian mystics, and another from the English literature of the Victorian period. The Vaishnava padabalis, Tulsidas' Ramayana, Bhaktamal, the vernacular translations of the epics, no doubt, are also great secular literature of which any country may be proud. At the same time, one cannot deny the existence of a very pronounced strain of the erotic emotion in the first, of emotional abandonment in the second, and a spirit of masochism in the third. Of all types of gush, the erotic is the most sickening; the artistic value of complete surrender cannot always keep pace with its spiritual significance; and masochism is so effeminate. To see Ramachandra, the conqueror of the mighty Ravana, weeping over Seeta's disappearance or Lakshman's collapse may act as a purge, but it palls. When Michael Madhusudan want-

ed to correct the tearfulness of Ramachandra, he was condemned by the Pandits as unorthodox, satanic, diabolical. He too could not run away from the legacy, in spite of the fact that his models were Virgil and Milton. Later writers had only Scott, Byron, and Shelley. On the English side, we know it for certain that almost every vernacular literature that is of some importance today started with the translations of the English romantics in prose and verse In China also, a similar procedure was adopted, but the result was different. The old humanist traditions of China were too powerful to be swamped.

Yet a subtle causation worked to implement and modify the Indian inheritance. It was offered by the mental climate of the class previously described. Contrast this class with the *bourgeoisie* of England or of the U.S.A., set off the Boston Brahmins in the flowering days of New England against the Poona Brahmins and the Bengali Babu, and you know the difference between Dickens, Hawthorne and the Indian novelist.[9] We repeat: India did not have a genuine middle class; she was forced to have a substitute group; she felt baulked in every way; she did not have any interest in the soil excepting in what it could yield in the way of surplus and unearned increment; she had no future of her own; so she only cherished her glories. The greater the feeling of deprivation, the greater the sentimentality. The Muslim memories of the recent past were stronger; the Muslims had less of the new class in their ranks; so their sentiment was mainly that of restoration.[10] In whichever linguistic area the new Bhadralok class sprang up, the new literature developed, and whenever it developed, it was reeking with emotions. Bengali emotionalism is a product of the Permanent Settlement and the Calcutta University. Gujerati sentimentality is less, because in Gujerat the native commercial class could not be liquidated so completely as in Bengal. If the entrepreneurs

must have their exercise of the heart, the specious ones should have their orgies. Any drama, any Indian film, mythological or social, is a waste of tears in an expanse of shame. And it is not shame for the original sin; it is the shame of frustration, pure and simple. Our literature is a perpetual nostalgia for the might have been. Even the so-called realism is romanticism reversed. An intelligent writer on modern Hindi Literature[11] had the following classification of its schools of poetry: Vaisnavism, mysticism, nationalism, pessimism, and experiments in verse; and divides the Drama into the Romantic and the Realistic. The examples of realism which he gives are streets away from the real stuff. No blame attaches to the authors as individuals. But the blame they must bear is that their historical consciousness has not been developed in any conscious manner, excepting in recent days.

Another manner in which the frustration was sought to be worked out was through the historical novel and drama. We have already referred to the growth of the 'historical sense' by the middle of XIX Century. Towards its close, Indians were fulfilling their wishes and seeking compensation through a literary resuscitation of their past. Rajput and Maharashtra history was handy, the heroes had the right stature, and their enemies being Muslim sovereigns could satisfy the anti-Muslim sentiments and simultaneously avoid the laws of sedition against the established form of government. The national song 'Bande Mataram' was sung by a band of Hindu sannyasin rebels against the Muslim oppressors of the Motherland. Romesh Chandra Dutt is better known in Bengal for his novels of Maharashtra's awakening [12] and decay than for his economic history. The dramas were yet more nationalistic. Occasionally, they were disguised in the mythological garb.[13] But usually, they had Muslim princes and princesses as their heroes and heroines. The lives of Sirajuddowla, Chand Bibi,

and Razia Sultana were good meat. Occasionally, the heroes of local fights furnished excellent materials for patriotism. Kanhaiya Lal Munshi's historical novels, the trilogy on Patan, played an important part in the literary and political renaissance in Gujerat. Barring a few, the whole corpus of modern Hindi historical drama may be said to be a re-hash of D. L. Roy's experiments in that field. In the last scene of a Hindi drama on Ranee Durgavati, the widowed queen, after successfully resisting all blandishments and machinations, ascends to Heaven in all her glory. The Indian stage must have any number of royal dresses, saintly beards and angelic wings among its properties.

Be that as it may, political intransigence was all the while growing, and some people felt that they could do without the disguise of history. All of them were not literary men, the most well known being politicians. An interesting feature of modern Indian prose is its close connexion with political journalism. The *Kesari*, the *Andhra Patrika* and the *Navajivan* may be rightly held to be the progenitors of modern prose in Maharashtra, Andhra and Gujerat. Both Tilak and Gandhiji are first-rate essayists in their languages. On the other hand, political essays in Bengali, if we leave those of a few aside, are not of that crystal quality. The reasons may be the greater rigour of the application of the laws of sedition, which made equivocation of the Ramsay MacDonald type a virtue, or the greater fascination of the 'Gaudiya' style for the nationalists of Bengal. Whatever they are, it is to be noted that the first important orientation in Indian politics is contemporaneous with the growth of political prose in Bengal, Maharashtra, Andhra and Gujerat. In Bengal, the philosophy of nationalism adumbrated by Aurobindo Ghosh in English became a plea for terrorism in exciting Bengali. The thrilling prose of the *Yugantar* still remains unrivalled. Tagore's political essays are gems of style,

Sakharam, Kaliprasanna, Panchcowri, Brabmabandhab built up the Bengali prose of today through their extremist essays and articles on political subjects. As in Bengal, so everywhere. And it was not confined to politics alone. Some of the best pieces of historical research were in the Indian languages. As one great scholar said: "We have so long read English to know ourselves. Let them pick up our language now if they want to write about us." A sentiment none too liberal, but it made for good prose—clear, simple and direct.

This all-embracing sentimentality generally stood in the way of wit, humour and satire, only allowing one form to succeed, viz. that which enabled the writer to express his dissatisfaction without much offence to the State or the society. Akbar's Urdu pieces, Bankim's *Kamalakanta*, D. L. Roy's comic songs are classics of their kind; but their softness could be better explained in terms of the authors' holding Government jobs than by any innate gentleness of Indian nature. Of course, the Sanskrit and Persian classics are also deficient in humour, but modern India could provide ample materials, at least for bitterness. What we find instead is a mild, amiable, reformist, didactic humour. The braver spirits, when they were not puritans and fanatics, could ventilate their wit against *social* abuses with impunity. G. Appa Rao's *Kanya Sulkam* written in the Vizag dialect of Telugu is one of the cases in point. Otherwise, wit, irony and humour lose themselves in righteous indignation. India has not yet produced a Voltaire, though she is supposed to be on the brink of a revolution. A phrase that stabs, an article that kills, a book that demolishes—these are not Indian phenomena. They posit freedom and faith in reason, which today are non-Indian commodities.

However much one might revolt against the sweetness of the modern vernacular literatures, their reformist zeal has always to be counted in their favour.

Through prose, poetry and drama, the call went out for removing the injustices in the social system. The position of widows, particularly the young ones, the conflict between the daughter-in-law and her new relatives, the problem of dowries, all came under the fire of criticism. It was the family maladjustments which formed the main object of assault. Gradually, the attack developed on other fronts, chiefly the caste-system and the Brahminical rule. The idea of romantic marriage based on the right of the individual to select the right partner soon became popular. What the various reformist movements were trying to do received impetus from the band of progressive writers that included women. Cases like these actually occurred: a father solemnly promised before the audience during the third act of a social drama that he would not charge the legitimate bridegroom price for his son who was a young Deputy Collector; a mother-in-law, after she had read a novel in which the young heroine committed suicide, allowed her son to take his wife away with him to his place of employment; a young man offered himself as the groom for an ugly and blind daughter of poor parents; young progressives of a village joined a delightful conspiracy to spoil an old man's third marriage; students with copies of literary magazines in their hands fell in love with either their second cousins or with the first fellow-girls they met at the gate of the college or in the bus. Till, say, 1910, the initiative for implementing literary action by conduct mainly rested with the males. Soon, the women took it up. But being essentially modest, our Indian girls only confined themselves to suicide, or life-long maidenhood, nursing or teaching. If compelled, they would practise the ideal of modern Indian womanhood in which the body belongs to the husband and his relations and children while the soul remains in elective affinity to the once beloved. Elopements prompted by literature were very, very rare. Usually, the influence

of literature on women was manifest in their desire to separate from the joint family and have a respectable friend near by. Sarat Chandra Chatterji's portrayal of the woman in revolt did as much for the emancipation of the Indian female as any Social Reform League ever did. More of him anon.

The reformist zeal in literature had certain limitations, however. The lower castes were not quite inside the pale of observation; and the social inequality was not further analysed into its essentials. In the main body of modern reformist literature in the Bengali language, only three major references to the material base of social injustices occur. Two are in the two lesser known essays of Bankim Chandra on the peasants and on the concept of equality, and the third is in Dinabandhu Mittra's *Neel Darpan,* in which the dramatist holds up a mirror to the exploitation of indigo-planters. Even then, in the first two cases, the tone is not strident, and in the third, the attention of the reader is riveted upon the Englishman's assault upon chastity rather than upon his economic exploitation, though the author's intention could be otherwise interpreted. The reformist writers were Government servants, and the shade of John Stuart Mill hid the Indian scene from Owen and Marx. The entire socialist literature of England and France was missed by our men of letters. It was in the thirties of this century that it was seized, though seized loosely. During this War the grasp became firmer, although there can be such a thing as romantic Marxism, vide the Famine literature.

The second good thing about the new tradition of sentiments was the love of nature that it generated. Unfortunately, after Kalidas, Nature had been almost quashed by spiritual urgencies. She led an apologetic existence in the folk-songs and the folklore. In Kabir and Dadu, nature is a store-house of examples for the love of God, and of precepts for the conduct of man.

With the medieval Hindi poets Nature is a source of pathetic fallacies. But by the middle of the last century, descriptions of the physical environment begin to appear. At first, the environment is unusual, and often non-Indian. Soon, however, local colour prevails. One wonders how far this recognition of the countryside was the gift of English culture or of land-mindedness, the upsurge of a new sense of patriotism that turned the attention of the intellectuals from the cities to the villages, or just the admission of incompetence to understand the implications of an urban culture. The first explanation would be plausible in view of that supreme quality of English culture, viz. its feeling for topography which stands out in English novels, stories, poems, paintings, even when the subject is Indian. But Shelley, Byron, and other major poets who affected the Indian poets most, had less of that feeling than the more typical, if minor, English ones. Sir Walter Scott's physical atmosphere of the Border, or Wordsworth's of the Lake District, had no counterpart in Bengal or Gujerat. There are no references either to the Norwich school, for the matter of that, to any school of English landscape. So, the genuine English feeling was probably not directly communicated. On the other hand, the indirect manner sometimes affected adversely . If the koel and the cuckoo, the lotus and the jasmine were old, the nightingale and the hawthorn had to be introduced, no matter if they were not Indian. Two consequences flowed from it: (*a*) Nature's beauty became very spiritual; (*b*) the description of Nature became un-natural, except in the hands of eccentrics and women. Nightingale=*a* bird, the eglantine =*a* flowering plant; this was the type of knowledge an Indian acquired in his school-days. 'Nature' in poetry thus became unreal and abstract, metaphysical, or all-too-human through the article indefinite. Therefore, the other explanation of the

new interest in nature is probably more adequate. The Indian middle classes were compelled to live in the cities, either as Government servants or as absentee landlords; they did not belong to the urban atmosphere; they disliked it; and romanticized the countryside in reaction. Still it was a gain that Nature had been detected, even if she could not yet be discovered. The moon, the river, the cloud, the broad sweep of the plains, the homeliness of thatched cottages and the majesty of the village banyan-tree began to hover over the literary scene in a way that had not been allowed by the schematizing rhetorician of earlier days.

One more result of emotionalism and we may pass on to the more pleasant prospects of Indian literature. Neither in Sanskrit nor in Pali is there any trace of priggishness in matters of sex. The Indo-Persian bisexual freedom is well known. Everywhere the man-woman relation is healthy. Gods and goddesses, princes and courtesans, princesses and their lovers obey the dictates of nature without fear of offending against a superior moral law. Certain divine creatures have behaved worse than human beings and been tolerated in Heaven. Their love is seldom unreal. Sentimentality comes in for the first time in the Vaishnava padabali literature[14] in which the bed is asked to hold and behold the play of spirit. Tantrik literature was saved by the severely practical but esoteric results of the physical union, and by the cult of the mother. But then its influence was much less than that of the Vaishnava verses. For one, it did not produce good poetry, and for another, its reading was confined to the upper castes who looked down upon the lower class Vaishnava sects[15] and their popular literature.[16] The social distance between the Tantrik and the Vaishnava sects was marked indeed.[17] The Victorian mood found a happy hunting ground in the vacuum. It was not exactly the puritanism of the John Knox type, but the prudery of the Victorian that

invaded Indian literature through the activities of the reformists. Where the Brahmos, Victorian Virtue's own middlemen, had any say, as in Bengal, blight fell on the natural, the so-called gross instincts and reduced men and women to straw and putty. No Bengali writer of eminence in the ninteenth century had any tactile sense. 'Decency' had killed it. The pre-occupation with sex that one finds in more recent Indian literature[18] often makes it pornographic, but it is an understandable reaction against the hypocrisy of the older generation.

Tagore's name has been scrupulously avoided in the preceding description of the main outlines of Indian achievements in letters. It looks like understanding Soviet Russia without Lenin. But the reasons for not including him in this orbit so far are manifold. He has created the Indian literature of today, but he stands above the criticisms which its study yields. He is too big, and for many strenuous days earnest students will seek to interpret him. His creations cover almost every imaginable aspect of culture. What Maxim Gorki felt about Tolstoy after his death is felt by every Indian who has cared to know his contributions. The debt of gratitude weighs heavily on the self-respect of those who were born within the fifty years of his rule. Those who are now critical are only dismayed, overawed by his overwhelming greatness. He has made it difficult for us to be original. The new impulse in Andhra, Gujerat, Maharashtra and Hindi poetry has emanated from him —in greater or less degree; this is admitted by the writers themselves. In Bengal, there is nothing in the way of culture that does not come from him or through him. He seems to have anticipated everybody, including those who write about the poor and the dispossessed.

That such a supreme genius should be thrown up by a subject people is a puzzle to the sociologist. He may be dismissed as a disease or a freak. But one who

knew him or has studied him well will not treat him thus. The social analysis given thus far does not quite fit him, this is an honest confession. Marxist interpretations of the fact of his greatness have been offered, but they are pathetically inadequate. He had his secret, apart from the personal one of being a genius. The secret was the Upanishads[19] and the appropriation of their doctrines for the world-view. Tagore proves the vitality of Indian culture, its capacity to give and take and build itself anew. The joy of living in tune with the Infinite, the dignity of the human soul, the sweep of creative unity, the assertion of the spirit against the bond of letter —these Upanishadic ideas enabled him to take in the Universe in giant-strides. It is wrong to explain him in terms of the East-West relation. Tagore is Indian all through, and being truly so, he absorbs the West easily, and rejects its excrescences with equal facility. There was a time when he was called the Indian Shelley. Happily, those days are departed. We have not yet comprehended his greatness, but at least we should know him to be one of the finest products of Indian culture. His specific contributions to *Indian* literature are the following:

(*a*) Lyric poetry. His own lyricism at its full is different from that of the English romantics, of the Sanskrit classics, and of the Vaishnava poets. Its quality is not that of 'wonder',[20] but of unison or oneness; it does not always impose private feeling upon natural objects, nor does it dance attendance upon a particular doctrine of love.[21] At the same time, it looks very much like the well-known varieties. Reading him through translations, one is tempted to call him mystic, vague, dreamy, sentimental, wishy-washy. In the original, his lyric gifts concern the concrete.[22] Unfortunately, it is the soulfulness of his more reputed poetry that has affected the younger generation of Indian writers. The reason seems to be that they have not had his grounding in the

spirit of the Upanishads, for the matter of that, in any basic traditional trait, without which lyricism is a flight into the cloudland. For the true lyric feeling to have a form one must needs be steeped in the traditional values; for conveying it one must be a person, i.e., an individual bold enough to re-orient the inherited values and work them out through concrete experience. Tagore's imitators have had no traffic with Indian culture, they are too unrelated to the Indian world to have any genuine feeling of experience. Yet the net result has been an increase in delicacy, in the enlargement of the number of moods, and in quickened facility in turning out good verse. Much of this poetry is easy virtue, but in India where all activities are clogged, ease is a virtue in itself. In Bengal, it is now almost impossible to write bad verse. Elsewhere, even indifferent imitators of Tagore's verses have broken the stereotypes.

(*b*) His world-view or internationalism. There was a time when this was equated by patriotic Indians to a weak-kneed trucking with the West, if not to something worse.[23] But his last-minute condemnation of British Imperialism is supposed to have made amends for his earlier weakness. All his Indian obituary notices stressed this point; the B.B.C. pointed out his anti-Japanese feeling. What, however, is not yet clear to most of us is that he was the first Indian to see the connexion between mechanical civilization, greed and nationalism.[24] In other words, he was the first anti-Fascist of this country, though he did not reach there through Marxism. The fact that many Indian writers would, if given a chance, betray the crudities of nationalism including hatred of the British and of the West may be advanced against the thesis that Tagore has made our writers world-conscious. This argument needs scrutiny. We will leave aside the last few years' happenings; they would make Christ and the Buddha spit venom.

But Indian Culture can, like the Lord Shiva, hold poison in the gullet, and forget it. The true reason is this. Two world-views are possible today, the materialist and the humanist. Modern India abjures the former; Tagore's is the latter. At one end of the humanist axis is the individual, at the other is the Universe, while the axis itself is the continuous culture of a country. That culture is something specific; and specificity, under certain conditions, takes the form of nationalism. But a chasm exists between the national and the nationalistic, nearly as big as between the socialistic approach of MacDonald and Snowden and the socialist endeavours of the Soviet. The non-co-operation and the two civil disobedience movements could not bridge it. India is still living on the edge of that gulf. She wants to cross it and realize the nature of her humanist and universalist culture. There is nature as it is and there is the nature in fulfilment; and there are tones and overtones. The fulfilment of Indian literature is in the overtone of universalism.

But the individual, frustrated that he is today, strikes a discordant note. So individuality has to be transformed into personality in order that Indian Culture may be more than specific, more than national, i.e. international and universal. That is Tagore. If the universalism in our modern literature is a bit thin, it is because of the stress upon the individual. Individualism, as middle classes in every country have understood it, is the weak link of Humanism. Tagore had strengthened it by his concept of Personality. Without his roots, without any fresh chance in the objective situation or a creative spurt, the Indian writer who will not be a materialist can only plant cactuses from the wasteland of Europe's thirties, call himself a humanist, and privately remain a mere nationalist.

A few words written in May, 1939[25] on Tagore's universalism as expressed in his literary writings

will not be out of place in this connexion: "The charge that Tagore ran away from politics when it became a serious business may be said to reflect the growth of Indian political consciousness, from its stage of mendicancy to that of vain assertion with its refuge in the myths of the past, thence to a clearer vision of national responsibilities of self-help, and ultimately, to the realization of the historical fact that India is linked up in urgent bonds with the rest of the world which, incidentally, is not merely England. What appears to be growing out of a movement for an individual is really the political development of the nation. Tagore once admired Japan when she stood for what was best in Asiatic culture, its values of beauty and discipline;[26] he has now condemned Japan when her proclaimed Asianism is a plea for imperialist exploitation.[27] Beneath these changes, his pattern of values remains stable, as will be evident from his earlier interpretation of Chinese culture and his proclamation of its unity with the Indian.

"Let there be no mistake in appraising Tagore's emphasis on culture. It is bound up with political independence in every case. Only, his idea of independence is not negative. Not being based on opposition it draws its strength primarily from indigenous potentialities, and secondarily from contacts with, or diffusion from, the outside world where human beings, instead of waiting on the transcendental, strain to live better by their own efforts and with the assistance of science. The only criticism that can be laid against this concept of culture is that it does not pay sufficient heed to economic forces. Tagore has not been a student of economic history and his concept of culture has been the loser to that extent. Yet he is personally alive to the economic problems of the world. His letters from Russia have a new ring of understanding. But it has been lost in the dulcet notes of his poems. But that is

the tragedy of the economic life of India and Bengal. Meanwhile, let us be content with his confession that he was wrong when he justified accumulation of property by the natural law which relegates the shadow beneath the light of the lamp.[28]

"Tagore's views on history are admirably summed up in an article called 'Kalantar' or Crisis......If we compare it with what he had written regarding ancient Indian Civilization[29] we notice the dynamics of his views. In the latter he spoke of the forests and the saints living therein in intentional inexistence. In the former (The Crisis) he refers to the quality of medieval Indian Civilization as affected by the Muslim conquest and differentiates it from that of the modern period in which contact with British rule has shaken our rural community life to its foundation by the exertion of pervasive pressure. But he refers also to the fruits of science and technology and envisages a state of Indian culture when it will have shed its obscurantist accretions. Above all, history is at last interpreted in terms of crisis as opposed to providential evolution. No doubt this is different from his earlier notions of development which partook of a Crocean unfolding of the Divine Spirit.[30] Since then he has not written on history, and the young Indian looks elsewhere for the thread that knits India with China, Abyssinia and Spain."

That was on Tagore's seventy-eighth birthday. On his eightieth birthday he spoke of what British Imperialism had done to India. Before that he had once more refused to shake the bloody hands of Japan, and replied in the language of a Hebrew prophet to Miss Rathbone's insulting appeal to India. These almost made Tagore into a popular hero, and partly accounted for India's great grief at his death. But in our hatred of the British rule we forgot his substance. We only chose to remember his diatribes against foreign rule, against the mechanical civilization, against materialism; we only watered

down his universalism, quoted his utterances on behalf of the down-trodden, the tillers of the soil, and thus circumscribed his humanist universalism to inflate his nationalism. We simply ignored his call of self-help, his affirmation of the principle that society was at the root of the State, his assertion that without an overhaul of the social system political independence was not worth having.[31] In spite of these convenient lapses of memory, Tagore's culture has entered into our marrow. It has made every Indian writer pine for a world-view. Jawaharlal would transform the vision into sight. Only, he will not write in any Indian language. If today there is no young progressive writer who is not an anti-Fascist, it is because of the fact that Tagore had preceded him to construct the frame of his outlook. No. 115 in the posthumous English publication, *Poems,* is an overtone of the cultural attitude of progressive Indian literature.

What Tagore stands for in Bengali literature does not come within the scope of this volume. Nor is it possible to measure to the full his influence on the forms of modern poetry in India, Hindi, Urdu, Gujerati, Marathi, Canarese, and Telugu. The two points mentioned above, his lyricism and universalism, have been more or less consciously imbibed. His rejection of asceticism, his concept of joy, and what is known as his mysticism, for example, could also be cited. The school of Hindi Chhayabad is a pale imitation of Tagore. But they are not his *specific* contributions. All these and many more are implicit in Indian traditions; they are in the Upanishads, in the medieval poets, in the teachings of Buddhist, Jain and Muslim saints.* Tagore is the synthesis of Indian Culture. He repeats in his biography the course of Indian history.

Most certainly, it could not be the full course. He himself had suggested many by-paths. When Tagore was alive the impulses that he had released were forging

* Vide the author's 'Tagore: A Study.'

new shapes. Many a writer, even in Bengal and of his entourage, was trying to create novel forms. This post-Tagore movement has been wrongly described by people who should have known better as a move away from Tagore. Nothing like it happened in Bengal. In other provinces, probably, a reaction set in. But its value can be judged from the fact that his total influence there had seldom been a conscious process. If the action was by hearsay the reaction could not but be senseless. Reaction against Tagore in the England of Chamberlain, the Germany of Hitler, and the Italy of Mussolini can be easily understood. Tagore was just at the opposite pole of these gentlemen. In India, the anti-Rabindranath attitude one notices occasionally is usually grounded on plain ignorance. The charge against his lyrical forms, his idealism, his mysticism, and his world-view cannot stand. He is the father of many forms, his novels and stories are real, his spirituality concrete, and his internationalism never rejects India. Yet, there is something in that protest which he was the very first to appreciate. Professors of literature have not seized it, however, when they call it Religion which must needs follow the romantic period in accordance with the dictates of professional critics. On the other hand, worshippers of Tagore deny the usefulness of critical dissent. But life does not wait for such men's understanding. And it is life that has moved the young writers to look ahead. These are often the minor ones who fill the pages of magazines with stories, issue slim volumes of verses, and otherwise behave like artists. They belong to coteries within which they are admired, and outside, condemned as highbrows. Very seldom are they original. Yet, in their entirety and in their aspirations they reveal an unmistakable urge. And by the strength of that urge they seem to have come closer to social realities.

From Tagore to Iqbal it is an easy jump, if one goes by reputation. Certain common features also class them together, e.g. nationalism of an early stage passing on to a wider vision, pre-occupation with the problems of self and the non-separation of poetry from philosophy, the stress on personality in the judgement of art, religion and ethics, a dignified attitude towards death (note the last words of both), and a critical approach towards Western contacts, to name a few only. Yet, the differences should be patent to all but the congenitally blind. Iqbal is essentially an Islamic poet, and his interests, after the salad days, are purely non-Indian. "Although I am born in India, the light of my eye is from the sacred dust of Bukhara, Kabul and Tabriz." (*Piam-i-Mashriq*). His humanism is weak, in spite of his deep sympathy for the peasant and the labourer. "Run away from the democratic form, be a slave to a Wise One, for even the brain of two hundred asses, does not produce the thought of a man." Such lines show his lack of confidence in men and women. His wise one was also a strong and a successful man, like Mussolini, on whom he wrote an ode. His symbol was the eagle. But, as Prof. Nicholson observes, "The affinities with Nietzsche and Bergson need not be emphasized. It is less clear, however, why Iqbal identifies his ideal society with Mohammad's conception of Islam, or why membership of that society should be a privilege reserved for Moslems. Here the religious enthusiast seems to have knocked out the philosopher—a result which is logically wrong but poetically right." We are here concerned with logic and poetry only through sociology. From this point of view, Iqbal's contribution to Modern Indian Culture is mainly indirect; because (1) much of his poetry is classical Persian, which is not easily understood by most of his co-religionists, (2) its broad and deep appeal is primarily to the Islamic peoples as such. His direct contributions are his Urdu poems, and the

few political pieces that culminated in the demand for Pakistan. In the first, he is more in the tradition of Ghalib than of Hali, though for a time Akbar's pithy style attracted him. His political speeches in the Punjab Assembly and the famous one at Allahabad in 1930 are, however, not contradictory. Read together, their maker can hardly be accused of the charge that he believed that Indian Culture was two. On the contrary, in asking the Muslims of India to understand the spirit of Islam, he was aiming, like Sir Sayyid Ahmad, at strengthening the base of Modern Indian Culture. The aim, being more than merely literary, could not be immediately realized. Thus it is that Iqbal's influence on Indian literature has been much less than that on Muslim middle class politics. Even his critical attitude towards Capitalism, which was prompted by his solicitude for the Muslim tenants against Hindu landlords and money-lenders, has failed to impress as a contribution to Indian economic thought. One wonders if Josh, Faiz and Mezaz are the direct consequences of Iqbal, the poet. They are *in* the current of Indian literature, much as Hali was, though with a richer deliberation, even if with less poetry.

Tagore and Iqbal were the universalists of modern Indian literature on the double strength of old traditions and new contacts. Both realized that culture in India could survive only by re-orientation and re-valuation. But other literary men developed a second attitude, not contrary to the previous one, but certainly different in emphasis. We have already referred to this attitude in connexion with the influence of Tagore's universalism, but we revert to it in view of its great prestige today and the passion and ability with which it has been expressed by some of the best modern writers. They have felt that the international outlook was good in its way, but not quite so good for all times. For example, it is

taken to be really premature for a dependent and poor country like India as she is, though not for what she will be once her nature is fulfilled. Their logic of creation is not quite that of either/or, but the logic of *the meanwhile, of one step at a time and one purpose for one stage.* They think more of the seed and the manure than they dream of the blossom. They underline the time-factor. In other words, they are the relativists of culture, with a historian's point of view and/or a realistic approach towards life as it has been and is actually being lived. This outlook cannot be the same as that of the all-timers.

We shall take only three writers out of a long list that could be prepared. They are the *representative* writers, when Tagore and Iqbal are the *symbolic* and the minor artists are the *typical and significant.* Kanhaiya Lal Munshi, Prem Chand and Sarat Chandra Chatterji probably did not know each other's languages intimately; they did not have the same status in life; their family-influences were dissimilar. Munshi, besides being a first-rate man of letters, is a brilliant lawyer, a well-known politician and an administrator of proved worth. The other two were of a retiring disposition, and did not bear the physical mark of talent on their brow. Their styles are not the same; Munshi's crisp and brittle, which appears even through translations; Chatterji's fluid and graceful; and Prem Chand's unassuming, to the point of non-existence, particularly in his later works. Their humour too: Munshi in his social skits and dramas is light and exuberant, Chatterji is sarcastic and ironical, and Prem Chand is grim. Munshi is intensely interested in history, the history of Gujerat, the history of India, the history of literature; Sarat Chandra's hobbies did not include it. Yet, they are bound by one common feature; they all take their stand upon Indian facts as they are, and once firmly planted there, they look out and can afford to feel idealistic.

Munshi's forays into the ancient history of Patan and Pataliputra are not masterly retreats into pre-arranged positions; they are defences in depth. In a manner of speaking, they are an exercise in tenses. His past, present, and future are put in scene over scene.

Munshi's works cover a wide field, social and semi-political novels, historical romances, mythological and social dramas, stories, essays, a couple of biographies, a standard history of Gujerat and its literature, and an autobiography. He is known to the writer through English and Hindi renderings only. But his first work strikes the key-note of his subsequent achievements. The hero of *Verani Basulata,* Jagat, is in love with Tanman. But the course does not run smooth, and he becomes a disciple of Anantanand, a Hindu Swami, who had started a *mandal* or a society at Ratangad to invigorate the dying nation with the living historical ideals of India. The Swami dies by *pranayam* in prison before he could be executed. The similarity of motif with Bankim Chandra's *Anand Math* is striking. But, probably, Munshi is at his best in his famous trilogy on the Chalukyas of Gujerat, *Patanani Prabhuta, Gujaratano Natha* and *Rajadhiraja.* The characters are men and women of royal proportions, warriors and statesmen, princes and ladies. Munjala is one of the rare portraits of a statesman by an Indian novelist. *Prithivivallabh* deals with the Dhara king, Munja. It is probably the most popular of his novels. He has also another on Kautilya to his credit. In his mythological dramas, the biography of Narsing Mehta, the various studies on Gujerat, and his latest Vedic novels, he shows the same historical sense as ever. But this history is not archaeology. At the same time, Munshi's history is not 'economic' either. After reading his novels one feels like saying with Croce that all history is contemporary history.

Prem Chand was not a scholar like Munshi; nor

was Chatterji. In their cases the relativist outlook was concentrated in an intense vision of the local and the immediate. Prem Chand was also interested in history. He wrote the drama *Karbala*, with a political motive. For obvious reasons it could not be played, and even if it could be, the forty-three scenes would have taken at least six hours. And then we have his numerous stories in which the glamorous deeds of India and acts of Hindu-Muslim unity are depicted. The nine novels and the remaining six volumes of stories deal with nearly all aspects of contemporary Indian life. Prem Chand's own subject is the lower middle class and the peasants in the villages. Read his two volumes of *Manasarovara* and his last novel, *Godan*, or that gem, *Kafan*, and you will see that he knew his men and women and their milieu. It is not suggested that all his characters have roundness. He himself admits in his introduction to the last collection of his stories, and elsewhere, that he is more interested in psychology. Prem Chand uses dialogues, but they are not dramatic. Here Munshi and Chatterji score over him, the former by his training as a dramatist, and the other, probably, by his innate gift. But Prem Chand's strength is in showing the pattern of living as it is actually lived and as it has evolved. Therein lies his real art. He puts characters in their setting; none stands out, but the milieu is seething with life. Compared to this achievement, his social idealism is sentimentality. Why should it be so ? Why is it that this almost socialist writer fails, exactly as Sarat Chandra fails in his *Pather Dabi*, to carry us with him along the very broad values of socialism ? How is it that we are moved to the depths of our being by one stray remark of a blind beggar, and simply reject the mass of sermons about humanity and all the rest of it ? It seems that Prem Chand took his stand on the specific qualities of a *particular* configuration. Only when he was firmly planted there that he could strike for

the larger issues. But he could not connect his configuration with the wider pattern. His thought-content was inadequate for his talents. The same with Sarat Chandra. Realism also posits a knowledge of the larger and the more material processes. Munshi, in spite of his scholarship in history, suffers from this deficiency and fights shy of materialism, which accounts for his over-emphasis on the racial factor, his mystique of Indian Culture. This qualified realism reveals the impulse behind the historicism of these three men. It is obvious that their concept of history is not what we read about in colleges and schools. Its sense of the present and the relative is genuine. It means the specific, the particular, the concrete and the immediate. But it fails to focus the general.

The resemblance between Sarat Chandra and Prem Chand's social ideologies is so close that it should have struck any observer of comparative Indian literature long ago. They share quite a few attitudes in common. The first is a deep sympathy for the unfortunate, the oppressed and the dispossessed. It extends to the women of the town, the vagabonds and the wastrels, those who live on the fringe of decent living and chalk out a substitute code of manners, a code that may be frowned upon by the more fortunately situated but is none the less one in which the spirit can move. These residents in the outskirts of civilized life have the dignity of the human soul; they are fresh in contrast with the decadent middle class; they are full against the hollow men, the stuffed men. Above all, they are rooted in the soil, they belong to the earth, to which the cattle belong. In fact, their sympathy with the animal world is very striking. The second attitude is one of social criticism towards the existing order of things. It is best illustrated in their revolt against the injustices towards women. Thus it is that both Prem Chand and Sarat Chandra are immensely popular with the educated

women of today. Sarat Chandra's women characters are certainly his best, if you exclude the ne'er-do-wells. They are of the same type, but they are fighters, they have pluck, they are not the *lalita-labanga-lata* of Jayadeva, or the swooning type of women you find in the canvases of some Indian painters. Still they remain women, tender in sentiments though tough in tongue. Munshi's women characters are also strong and firmly drawn. Their examples are reported to have caused family rebellion.

These two attitudes, working with others, have made up the immense social significance of Prem Chand, Munshi, and Sarat Chandra. When we remember the number of people who speak Hindi, Bengali and Gujerati, we can easily gauge their influence and their representative character. The subject matter that called for the above outlook has led people to label Prem Chand and Sarat Chandra, particularly, as realists. Well, they are realists in a way, if one puts them in the earlier contexts of Hindi and Bengali literatures. But if realism means anything more, say, a scientific temper, as Zola pointed out many years ago, or a sense of history, as Lenin suggested, then Prem Chand and Sarat Chandra Chatterji are not realists. Nor is Munshi, in spite of his claim that he portrays characters as they are. Nowhere do we find the same grip over the objective reality and its subjective counterpart as Gorki had or as Malraux possesses. Of course, a vision is always necessary, as both Gorki and Malraux betray. But it should be clearly seized, otherwise it remains just the dreamy gaze of the Blessed Damozel, with big vacant eyes seeing nothing, a pose. And here, one must notice one vital point of difference between Prem Chand and Sarat Chandra. Prem Chand was getting more and more progressive in his social views while Sarat Chandra's last works were becoming apologies for traditions. Probably, that also can be accounted for by the relative strength of the

middle classes in the two provinces. What is the future of Munshi, the brilliant *litterateur?*

Very significant things are happening to Urdu literature. The Urdu poet has had probably a heavier deadweight of set imageries but a lesser one of typical emotions and responses than his Hindi counterpart. In any case, he has had less to carry of metaphysical lumber. Like the Muslim young man, the Urdu poet may, if he chooses, travel light, which gives him a greater chance to think of the world to come. Sociologists may detect in this outlook (1) a lesser quantity of vested interest, (2) the two Islamic traditions of millennial promise and social equality in faith, and (3) a greater dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs in family, in society, in economics and politics. The Hindu who writes in Urdu has probably had a deeper understanding of Islamic culture than the Hindu who only writes in his vernacular about Muslim life. The understanding first came through contacts with the court, and accounts for the courtly polish of his poetry. The real point about modern Urdu literature is its faith and optimism, often derived from Socialism. Two poems on the Red Flag, one by Mezaz and another by a Bengali Hindu, Subhas Mukerji, show the difference that resides in the similarity. The former lacks the concreteness of the latter, though both convey hope. It is characteristic of Urdu poetry that even a revolutionary poem, say, one on the railway engine, should be sung in a melody suited to Kadar Pia or Dagh's compositions. Urdu literature is still deficient in novels. For the matter of that, Muslim novelists in Bengal (all write in Bengali) are also less significant than the Muslim poets, Qazi Nazrul Islam, Jasimuddin, and others. The reason seems to be that Muslim family life is more deficient in variety and drama than the Hindu family life, dreadfully monotonous as it is. (Ahmad Ali's *Twilight in Delhi*, though written in English, is a bold departure,

and therefore, a notable exception.) But short stories and essays are coming up in Urdu. The *Angare* blazed a trail when it was burnt in the bazaar by the Maulavis. Since then a number of good stories have appeared. Though most are modelled on Prem Chand, few seem to have reached his standard of achievement. Their technique is usually that of reportage of subjects, picaresquely or anecdotally conceived. Modern Urdu literature, on the whole, is exciting. Provided it gets rid of its Iranian complex[32] and comes closer to the language of the people, its technical future is assured. The same could not be said for modern Hindi literature. It is already prosody-perfect, and with its closer affiliations to Sanskrit and medieval Hindi it is less likely to shed its inheritance and come to terms with either the Thet-boli or basic Hindustani. Efforts are no doubt being made in many directions, in the importation of a social vision, in the cult of regional Hindi, through prose-poems, verse-libre, etc. In all these Suryakant Tripathi, probably the best Hindi poet of our days, shows the way. Yet one who has attended a number of Kavi Sammelans and Mushairas must have noticed the difference in the quality of response of the audience to the recitation of modern verses. Be that as it may, both Hindi and Urdu modern poets want to travel beyond their four corners, look at the world, collect ideas, and come back to change and construct anew. The two kindred points they want to be true to are Russia and the home. Very few of them can be called major writers from any considerable standard, but few also are in the England of today. Even Prem Chand was not uniformly first-rate, though exception must always be made of his short stories which can hold their own against the best that other countries can offer. His novels seem to fall apart, much as Sarat Chandra Chatterji's did. Yet Prem Chand's influence on society and on young writers has been less than that of Chatterji. Probably, the reason is the greater disintegration

of Chatterji's society and a brisker literary exercise in his language and province.

Thus we see that modern Indian literature is characterized by an increased emphasis on social content. The scope of the subject for novels, stories and poems has been considerably enlarged. It is now far away from mere social reform. Mostly, the situations relate to conflict, and their treatment is sociological. Various problems are discussed, of maladjustment between the husband and the wife, between the individual with his new values of personal welfare and the society with its ancient code of static morality, between the educated youth with his romantic notions and the stern realities of life incarnated in his mother.[33] The urban encroachment upon the social economy of village life has also formed the subject matter of some significant stories and novels.[34] The fall of the landed gentry,[35] the rise of the petty *bourgeoisie*, the life of the unfortunate men and women in the cities and of peasants in the village have also crept in recently, while class consciousness has also been indicated and stressed. In a word, social conflict is the modern literary theme. But the way in which it is sought to be resolved is interesting. In a large number of cases, the hero or the heroine submits to the social code, though with a heavy heart. The heaviness is supposed to be the mark of tragedy, while, probably, the ultimate submission is the more tragic of the two. When the hero or the heroine continues to revolt, he or she builds a Utopia or joins an 'ashram'. This misplaced seriousness has made many of our minor artists incorrigibly didactic, including the realists among them. The explanation of the spirit of the revolt lies in the increased social mobility among the middle classes just as much as that of its fizzling out consists in the gulf that still separates the lower middle class from the masses. It is the historically conscious among the former who are interested in creating 'proletarian literature'. While we are

not sure if anything important has been achieved in that line, we have no doubt that the very recent novels, stories and poems, particularly those occasioned by the disastrous famine in Bengal and the all-India distress, disintegration and exploitation, have registered a solid benefit from the Socialist approach. There are, of course, Marxist romantics here as in other colonial countries.

Another symptom of change in modern Indian literature is offered by travel-diaries and sketches and the large number of free translations from modern European novels. The former are outspoken essays, describing the vigorous qualities of Western life, chiefly its freedom of manners, equality of sex, and social elasticity. The best sketches are usually by women;[36] when they are not they betray a feminine quality of observation.[37] Tagore's later travel-diaries remind us of Keyserling's. In translations, the choice differs from province to province, but the writers of short stories generally commandeered are Maupassant, Tchechov, Poe and Lawrence. Both the selection and the cross-section are typical. The erotic interest of the first and the last, the gentle melancholy in the life of the shabby gentility portrayed by the second, and the strange horror of the third enable the Indian readers, mostly women, to enjoy the pleasure of compensation and recognition. They cool the jaded nerves of the bored. Translations from novels cover a much wider field. They are mostly of the annual Nobel Laureates in literature. Scandinavian and Russian novelists are the favourites today as Scott and Dickens were fifty years ago. In poetry, Bengali magazines revel in Ezra Pound, Lawrence, Eliot, Auden, Spender, Baudeclaire, Rimbaud, Yeats, Macneice, and many more. The English poets of the twenties and the thirties have been most exploited. Scientific books have also been rendered into the vernaculars. Children's literature has often been bodily lifted. Sex literature is popular. Inter-

provincial translation is also going on, often with complete disregard of the laws of copyright. This large mass of derivative literature betrays the secret desires of our society to get rid of its numerous complexes, by facing them elsewhere. If we could resolve them here and now, and by our own social efforts, our literature would have been naturalistic. In other countries, this valuable sense of social conflict is a source of tremendous energy that can be harnessed to artistic expression. Here it remains on the level of emotional discontent. When artists fail to utilize the forces of disruption, the extension of the scope of literature remains a burden, and artists protect themselves in little redoubts of their own, behind the defences of doctrines. Consequently, Indian criticism today is either Pateresque and Wildeish, or superficially Marxist. Our increased social content has not been followed up by a growing thought-content. A knowledge of the social processes through which Indian society is changing, of the historical reasons for its integration and disintegration, is the supreme literary need. (It is *not* the culture of classical objectivity[35] that is wanted, as an Indian writer long settled in England thinks in his contribution to *The Legacy of India.*) Otherwise, discontent, experiments, quantity of output, enlargement of the scope, all remain as symptoms of the crisis, but not as indicators of the future course of our literature. Only a thus enriched sense of values can exploit the sense of facts, or objectivity, as it is known. The latest symptoms are, however, hopeful.

Other consequences of the derivative literature have also been mixed blessings. Stilted style has been made fashionable; readers have been split into coteries with special interests and sophisticated attitudes of the high-browed, on the one hand, and the vague wish-fulfilments of the low-browed, on the other. There has been some endeavour to interpret Indian life in the light of comparative values. But there is no parallel in India

to the Catholic poems and novels of France. There is no such thing as even a purely Hindu or a purely Muslim novel. It is either Anglo-Hindi or Anglo-Islamic. When otherwise, a Muslim hero elopes with a Hindu widow, or a Hindu graduate sighs his life out for a Muslim girl who has just discarded the purdah and does not know what to do with her freedom and looks like joining a cinema company or a leftist club.

Poems are naturally more remote from social contact than novels and stories are. The content has to be ground finer in poetry. In the recent past the tradition was to keep poetry safe from problems. Many of Tagore's statements show how jealous he was of the poet's isolation.[39] This does not mean that his poems avoided issues. Only they did not wear them on the surface. But the sum-total of his teachings points towards the detachment of poetry from what is known as 'problems.'[40] Problems, and specially social ones, however, refused to be kept out.[41] When they were allowed entry, they pressed for formal and mental changes. Experiments in verse occurred in plenty, but the new attitudes were comparatively few. In the absence of the 'extra fact' they remained poetic gestures. Instead of optimism we thus got pessimism. If it is still optimism, it is for the new social order. Revolt is still cribbed in sex. It is Freud and Marx in uneasy alliance, with Freud as the dominant partner. On close analysis, the poetic note of despair and frustration yields the same result, misfit of the individual with the class that is doomed.[42] The poems of the humble and the lowly, of the rebel and the wastrel[43] are either songs in praise of departure from the social norm or expressions of pious wishes with the sure knowledge that they cannot be fulfilled. They are usually loud, full of sound and fury. That loudness is a confession of fear. Canister-cries seldom make revolution. The amorphous desire to rebel is not the revolutionary temper to create. Here

too, the sense of social direction is lacking, and constructive efforts that will forge ahead of Tagore have not yet been planned. The romantic nostalgia of the ruralist, the isolation of the purist, the self-pity of the individualist for whom the pity is in the poetry, the Whitmanly holloaing to rouse the 'oppressed, the suppressed, the repressed and the depressed', are creating a literature of wish-fulfilment and escape. The general idea is to solve the conflicts by flight or by shutting one's eyes to them. Telescope on the eye defunct is expected to abolish the enemy around. All this makes our up-to-date literature symptomatic, but not highly significant. It promises well, it has not yet achieved much. The Indian middle classes were meant at best to be scholars in English; they produced at least three Indian literatures, which was not in the bargain. Today, they have been instigated by their own social pressure to look beyond their class; if their vision is blurred, they still deserve credit. No similar body in the world ever suffered from more stringent limitations.

The previous estimate may appear to be harsh. But it need not be misunderstood. For one, it relates to the period before the War when the whole world remained in perpetual crisis, and India could not escape the general mood of futility. For another, India was working out her political destiny, and no serious thought could be given to other needs and values. Again, in that period, India's social consciousness was feeling its way, but had not yet arrived. Today, however, the issues are clearer than before. The cost has been tremendous, but some gain has accrued. No young writer of note now sits on the fence and allows the iron to enter into his soul. There has been some understanding of the social processes, some improvement in the scope and the quality of vision, some increase in compactness, objectivity and observation, some more vigour, at least as much as has been permitted by the Defence of India

Rules. Still all that is insufficient for the need and the appetite and the ability. One still finds the old nostalgia and an inadequate grasp of realities. Still the derivativeness remains, this time of Russian stories and novels, and not the best ones at that. Criticism is a branch of *belles-lettres* in which modern Indian Culture has been singularly weak. It seems that our critical faculties have been fully engaged by the British, leaving nothing for literature. Uncritical use of Marxist phrases and Caudwell's schema is nearly as romantic and unreal as anything that had gone before. Yet, the net gain in the deepening and extension of social consciousness abides.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIOLOGY OF MODERN INDIAN MUSIC

Hindustani classical music* is about three to four hundred years old. Like modern Indian literature, it is indebted to the various culture-compulsions of the Middle Ages. To attribute its rise to this community or that is unsociological. That the cultural synthesis in music took place when the rulers were Muslims does not make it any more Islamic than the Hindu names of singers, composers, scholars and patrons would make it Hindu. *It is just Indian.* Certain scholars urge that at least the base of Indian music was Hindu. But then the pre-Muslim scale, or the vertebral structure, that which survives in Madras and Mysore, is equivalent to the Northern Indian Kafi, whereas that of Hindustani classical music as we know it today is the Bilawal. How it was changed can only be guesswork, but that it has so changed our audile habits that the finest vocalist from Tamil land fails to enthuse Lucknow is a fact observed. He is alleged to sing out of tune, though his airs sound so familiar. The second historical fact about our classical music is that it was never above incorporating the *folk,* the *regional,* even *non-Indian* types. Dhrupad, which is reputed to have been sung before Akbar and which is so high-browed that nobody now listens to it, was in a sense the Agra-Gwalior style, just as Holi-Dhamar belonged to Mathura. Bengal gave *bangali,* Sindh *sindhu,* Surat *Surat,* Gujerat *gujarati,* Bihar *behari,* Multan *multani,*Jaunpur *jaunpuri todi,* the hills *pahari,* just as Turkey gave *turask todi.* And all these raginis are Sastric. Not only the ragas, but the rhythms as well, e.g. *Holi-Dhamar* of Mathura, and *Punjabi 'Theka'* of the Punjab. This process of adaptation continued right

up to the end of the eighteenth century, though in diminishing strength. A third fact is that our classical music has always served two masters, religion and the court. Dhrupad is defined in the texts as songs in praise of gods *and* kings. Gradually, the kings prevailed, and the gods were sung in the *deshi* fashion. By the eighteenth century, when it became a courtly affair, music gained in sweetness and subtlety, but it lost its pristine simple vigour. Eventually, it became vocal gymnastics, until the romantics in the provincial durbars started protesting. One such protest was Thumri, which probably originated, certainly was developed in Lucknow. That protest also petered out into grossly sensual and mechanically repetitive expositions. Indian feudalism had by then completely isolated itself from the life of the people. The music that it patronised was living on its inertia. Such features are nothing special to Indian music. They are mentioned because many people in India think that our *ragas* and *raginis* emanated from the gods, that they have no history except the story of degeneration since the days of the Rishis and the great masters of old.

One feature, however, is peculiar to the growth of Indian music. It makes no distinction between composition and execution. Not that some of the Dhrupad, Bhajan or Kirtan songs cannot hold their own against the best European plain songs and hymns, but of composers in the European sense, i.e., as a class of artists whose function is not execution, we have had none. The specialties of our system, its nuances and nature of improvisation, were not favourable to notation that could divide the labour. Oral tradition was the rule here, as in all other branches of knowledge, because the Indian had always sought to keep learning under the control of experience. A general feudal structure in which crafts were not differentiated beyond the point at which the craftsmen formed a caste, and not high up at that, was

also responsible for this combined functioning. The immediate reason was that because both poetry and music served religion and royalty, any outpouring of devotion and loyalty would be good enough so long as the desirable sentiments were there. And so far as the patron-kings' and saints' appetites were concerned, it was but natural that the sentiments should know of no artistic limits. Despotism, benevolent or malevolent, mixes up arts and crafts; only when it is weakened either by internal stress or by external pressure does it split them up. The courts of Mahummad Shah at Delhi and of princes in the South who flourished after the Mughal Empire, had become ramshackle, have given us whatever 'composers' we have in Kheyal. Even then, Sadarang's Kheyals have to be sung in the Gwalior style to be appreciated. The Kirtans of the Holy Trinity in the South are the only great compositions preceding Tagore's pieces.

Till the eighties of the last century, Hindustani music was leading a sheltered existence in the courts of princes, big and small. We are told that our noblemen cared for music, patronised musicians, and tolerated their airs. Experts belonging to well-known musical families, *gharanas,* were carrying on their traditions with some zeal and considerable ability. In spite of local and stylistic differences, a certain norm was conserved. It was respected, but it was not sacrosanct. For example, *Basant* with and without *pancham* was equally dear. Certain compendiums and commentaries had appeared, but their importance was preservative. The masters were rigid disciplinarians, as any group would be in a closed atmosphere. The South was a little better placed. Madras pandits would ascribe it to the unbroken continuity of Hindu musical traditions in the South. But if Urdu, which is reputedly a Northern Indian product, came to its own through the Muslim principalities in the South, and if, as we know, Dakshini

pandits were invited by Muslim durbars in the North to set musical matters right, we cannot fully accept the explanation. The North and the South had never been completely divided. Yet the admission has to be made that what was being done to Indian music by the Muslims in the North during the Pathan and the Mughal period was not being done in the Karnatic. The old tradition there was probably left to repair and renew itself. And its resources were not negligible. For aught we know, the Bhakti cult came earlier and was more pervasive there than in the North. It had created a richer devotional literature, invaded metaphysics more effectively, and influenced other cults, e.g., the Shaiva, more deeply. On the other hand, the submission to orthodoxy was fuller. It will be inaccurate, however, to assert that the submission at any stage was a surrender. Thyagaraja, for example, was not a mere conformist, just as Veena Sheshanna often played the truant. In the Maharashtra country, there was no such valuable tradition to keep or correct. Consequently, no opposition was offered there to the introduction of the Hindustani style of the Gwalior variety. The wide diffusion of the Gwalior culture-traits in music is a very interesting study. From Man Thanwar of the fifteenth to Haddu Khan and his family of the nineteenth, it has been almost a procession of conquests. Karnat alone resisted it, and Bengal found it rather trying. Maharashtra musicians today occupy the front rank among the vocalists in the North; yet, seventy-five years ago, Maharashtra belonged musically to Madras.

The eighties were a turning point. The princes had given place to the zamindars and merchant-princes. The zamindars now absented themselves from their estates and flocked to the cities, the seats of Government, business and pleasure. Merchant-princes, in their turn, were becoming land-minded and buying up estates, but they preferred to remain urban. Both felt it their duty

to be patrons of Indian culture. Little courts were formed, and the musicians poured into the cities from the decaying durbars. There was hardly a musician of note who in that period did not come to the then Imperial city of Calcutta to try his fortune. Bengal got a taste of classical Hindustani music from that date. The earlier connexions were faint ones, and the Vishnupur style, of which Bengal is proud, was Bengali. It bore the same relation to the Gwalior style as Krittivas' Ramayan does to the original. After the death of Wajid Ali Shah of Oudh, who is alleged to have taken 108 musicians with him to his place of exile in a suburb of Calcutta, Maharaja Sri Saurindra M. Tagore began seriously to collect musicians and stimulate theoretical interest in music by writing compendiums. His name is still revered by the older generation of musicians. In this patronage he was followed by his fellow zamindars of Bengal. Be it noted that forms other than the classical also received their kind regards. Some of these forms were positively vulgar. Later on, the Sangeet Samaj was established under the joint auspices of the zamindars and the professional classes. The functions were confined to monthly soirees, occasional staging of plays, frequent feasts, and daily displays of wealth. In short, the Samaj was concerned with entertainment in which waste was more conspicuous than art. When the Sangeet Samaj collapsed by its weight, a number of smaller clubs and schools of music grew. About this time the Jnanottejak Mandali was formed in Bombay. Its purpose was more serious than simple entertainment. If the Sangeet Samaj of Cornwallis Street, Calcutta, is only a name in Bengal, the latter is responsible for at least three colleges of classical music in India and two dozen books. Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande was a member of that Mandali, and founded his pedagogics on his lectures there. Elsewhere, e.g., at Patna, Gaya, Bhagal-

pur, and other cities of note in Bihar, the local gentry fostered the revival of interest and exchanged musicians with Bengal. In Madras, at least in the city and in the Tamil land, musical activity continued, with a slight shift in taste towards Hari Katha among the new elite. The Pandits went on interpreting the Srutis and produced many subtle, if somewhat meaningless, commentaries. The position in the U.P. was peculiar. This province has the largest number of cities in India of which the majority have had historical importance. So the natural expectation is that they should have given the lead to the renaissance. Nothing like it happened. Benares had a distinctive style that was preserved by a caste; Allahabad had none of its own; Agra exported musicians to the Indian states and retained none for itself; Lucknow became interested in the dance school of the famous brothers, Kalka-Binda; Cawnpore was a *parvenu,* and Meerut was a cantonment. Only one area, Rohilkhand, with the Rampur State as its nucleus, remained musical. The Nawab of Rampur had the finest collection of musicians, vocalists and instrumentalists, and an excellent library of music. Saharanpur became the home of Sarod. But it was classical, and nothing but classical. The reasons for this phenomenon of the U.P.'s failure to lead in music in spite of the possession of a large number of good musicians were entirely social. Here were the taluqdars of Oudh and the zamindars of Agra. None, barring a few in Benares, were permanently settled landlords. The thirty years' revision made them more dependent upon the Government than their counterparts in Bengal had to be. English education came a bit late, and in a half-hearted manner. The new aristocracy found it more paying to please English officials than to learn English and exploit the culture that it brought. (Naturally, English recruits to the Civil Service would usually give the U.P. their first preference for postings.) Between this class

and the absence of a new professional class, music, like other fine arts, wilted. Not that the 'barons' were puritans, but they only wanted to keep the domestic atmosphere undefiled. Dancing girls would certainly be invited on every festive occasion in the Hindu and Muslim household, but it was a formality. In the eighties, even much later, the dancing girls of Lucknow would give 'lessons' in manners. The musicians proper retorted by keeping a jealous guard over their trade secrets. Their race was disappearing by disuse. But the thirties of this century, when the middle class suddenly awoke to culture, they had to import musicians from Maharashtra to teach music to their sons and daughters. To-day, the Marris College, renamed the Bhatkhande University, has become the premier institution in Northern India with about 800 boys and girls, nearly all belonging to respectable middle class families. Students from Ceylon also are to be found there. The dancing classes are crowded with girls, some of whom of 'high' families can give points to the professionals in poses and movements of the eyes, arms and hips. The Government has neglected this first-rate institution by reducing the grant, which was none too generous.

The Punjab in the last quarter of the nineteenth century had three well-established styles of music, Kheyal of the Muslim gharanas, the Shabd, and the Tappa. The first specialised in quick *tans* and *palta* and, unlike the Agra-Gwalior style, leaned more towards the Tappa than towards Dhrupad. 'Shabd' is the devotional music of the Sikh. Its voice-production, dignity and movement make it akin to the Dhrupad. Tappa is a peculiar product of the Punjab, and is supposed to be derived from the camel-driver's songs. It, however, leaped across a thousand miles and founded a tradition in Bengal. The two hops were Lucknow in the U.P. and Gaya in Bihar. When the Punjab became rich, thanks to the river colonies and the Government contracts, musical

style was partially displaced by the sartorial.

The previous survey excludes folk-music. It had to wait until Tagore took it up. In the interval, it just managed to keep the villagers merry in their seasonal and family festivities and devout in their spiritual moments. On the other side, the Indian States had their retinue of men and women musicians, mainly as symbols of their ancient prestige. It was only when a prince would be born, a princess married, a brother-prince or an English lord would visit the court that the patrons would trot out their proteges. The rest was silence.

After the eighties, the composition of the elite in Bengal, Bombay and Madras underwent a change. The middle-middle class, consisting of the degree-holders, Government servants, lawyers, teachers, doctors, engineers, and the like, became numerically stronger and more articulate. They had two main attitudes—one, to ascend the scale and end in Rai Bahadurship, the other to feel *nationalistically* and challenge the supremacy of Western culture by singing the ancient glories of India. The first became associated with the puritanic neglect of music, of other arts too, and the second brought about the revivalist movement. In Bengal, the puritanic fervour was stronger than the revivalist, and in Bombay, it was the converse. This new stratum in Bengali society became deaf to music and plugged the ears of those who would cultivate it. In our younger days, ignorance and disrespect of music had received almost an official validity. Only the ne'er-do-wells would learn it, and the worth of the culture was as usual estimated by the social worth of its exponent. The musicians as a class were pariahs, and music was taboo in nearly all families except those who, like the Tagores and the Chowdhuries, were rich and large enough to be sufficient unto themselves. In East Bengal, however, zamindars' sons could be musicians. But

then, they were zamindars, and not the middle-middle class. The members of this latter class in East Bengal, when they became urbanised, sublimated their horror of sex into a hatred of music and the stage. They had not even Aurangzeb's justification of religious injunctions; on the contrary, their god was Joy. The community-prayers of this 'flower' of new Bengal were almost funereal. There was no classical music among Muslim families in that province, but *deshi* music was indulged in while the Maulavi was away.

In Maharashtra and Madras, music was not forbidden. Veena in Karnatak and Kheyal in Maharashtra were considered parts of a liberal education. Earlier than in Bengal, music had penetrated into the interior of the southern household. Thus, for example, in the south, even before 1920, a good voice or a fondness for songs did not bar a respectable girl's marriage-prospects. In Bengal, it did. The standard of amateur competence in Madras and Maharashtra was not negligible either. It was, and is still, not the custom there for parents to parade their infant prodigies.

The release in Bengal was effected by a combination of two sets of factors. A number of graduates were being poured out of the University. They were in excess of the Government and the mercantile demand for clerks. But the numerical increase compelled the graduates to take to something else than submitting applications. Now that the exclusiveness of the upper middle class was broken, the social circulation was brisker. The Bengali unemployed Babu began to look out for himself. Doors of commercial undertakings had been shut by the Scotch and the Marwari in the name of the graduate's worthlessness and his sense of false prestige; capital was not available, who would trust the poor? So the Bengali graduate took to literature and music, to insurance and the films, in a chronological sequence of despair. Sir Asutosh had asked the Ben-

gali graduate to stand on his legs. If the legs were weak, it was none of his doing. In Bombay, the Parsee or the Gujerati youth did not have to fully face the unemployment problem. He could still desist from being a clerk. The Bhatia of Gujerat had not been suppressed. He had flung his commerce all over the East. The commerce-capital of Gujerat had been the only shutter left open in the closed room of India; and it had made the Gujerati friendly to new traits of culture and experiments. The Parsee had little time for such frivolities as Indian music. We will take up the Maharashtra case later.

The second factor that opened the flood-gates of music in Bengal appears to be human. A band of brilliant composers started the spate of songs. Ram Prasad, Nidhu Babu, and others including a Father Anthony and a Maharajah of Burdwan, had written a few good pieces. But once Tagore came, a new opening in the history of Indian music was made. He was followed by D. L. Roy, Rajani Kanta Sen, and Atul Prasad Sen (of Lucknow). Before we take up Tagore, the greatest of them all, we may mention the common features of their works. All of them were rebels, and their heterodoxy consisted in a fine combination of the ignorance of the subtler rules of grammar with a more or less sure comprehension of the spirit and the architecture of the *raga*.. They mixed airs, Indian and foreign, classical and romantic. They paid due heed to the beauty of words. They differed, however, in the degree of the mixture and in the evocative value of their poetry. With Tagore, the mixture became an individual product and the poetry ineffably beautiful.

He alone followed the logic of the revolt. Yet all these composers had a common social context, which is revealed in their 'national' songs. They could not stand the political subjection and wanted India to be free. What they did through their music to the national

movement cannot be discussed in this volume. D. L. Roy's comic songs, which in virtue of their comicality alone are worthy to be ranked by the side of the verses of Barham and Hood, had a strident note of social criticism against the hypocricy of the middle class. Rajani Kanta's comedy was cruder. A. P. Sen was wrapped up in love-songs when he was not composing patriotic verses. A subtler relation between the composition and the social context is exposed in their love-songs which are often so sweet, so pure, so puritanically cautious, so mixed up with spirituality, in fact, so typically Bhadralok. But it should be said at once that the context does not fully hold Tagore. He steps out of it, looks behind and beyond, and marches on. His best love-songs can be sung by none but the brave. They are the least known; which, however, is socially significant.

Tagore's own development* as a composer largely followed the needs of the growth of Indian musical forms. This is as it should be. A great man cannot but repeat in himself all the vital stages of life and culture. He pushes some ahead and brings out the latent energies in others, but he exploits them all. There are at least four mile-stones in the history of his composition. In the first, he was following the behests of practice and writing poems to well-known melodic patterns. Conformity was the rule. Even then the earlier pieces had elements of novelty. They gave little scope to fast *tāns*. Much of this restriction was due to the Dhrupadic structure of the songs, to the richness of their poetry, and to the peculiar deficiency of the language, as he found it then, in the matter of vowels, the preponderance of consonants, and the abrupt endings of words. Besides, the songs would often describe the dramatic features of the story-element, as of *Valmiki-Prativa* and *Mayar Khela*. Hindustani music also possesses elements of surprise in the permutation and combination of notes, in *tān, murchhanā,*

chhutt, gamak, etc. But *tãns* are excluded in Dhrupad. So the others alone can be used, and they were used. But, and this is the touch of Tagore, when these existing dramatic conventions were not sufficient, Tagore was not averse from the adaptation of European airs for his purpose.

It was of course more than mere passive adaptation, it was an authentic act of creation. Pluck out the words of the songs in *Mayar Khela,* so foreign when first heard, spread out the melody, and you get the skeleton of the Indian 'raga,' often in a different key. Yet, taking all the songs that he wrote before, say, 1900, the general feature was an elastic orthodoxy rather than a controlled heterodoxy. In fact, the musicians and the 'cultured' audience had not yet cursed Tagore with bell, book and candle; his Brahmo Sangeets were quite popular with the Ustads.

Gradually, however, Tagore's heresy was peeping out. He was blending airs, mixing up castes! From its early days, the Indian musical system has been classified into *jatis, ragas* and *raginis.* The essence of the scheme is the fixation of the genus and the species according to structures. In the *thāts,* as the genus may be called, the bare essentials are indicated in a sequence of notes, and any aberration in the development is almost a religious offence. At the same time, however, latitude has always been given to the possibility of admixture in the execution of characteristic phrases of two or three cognate ragas or species within the same *thāt* or genus. This was at once a concession to the physical limitations of the voice and the inner impulsion to cross artificial barriers, and a recognition of emotive affinities. In *Kanada* and *Bahar,* for example, the difference in *thāt* is transcended by a fundamental similitude that comes out in *tãns.* The various texts (Shastras) came to terms with the realities of the situation and recognised these alliances with trans-frontier

ragas. Throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, practising artists had been preparing all kinds of mixtures of species. Some like *Jhinjitkhambaj* became very popular; a number of them like *gaud-sarang, nat-kedar, puriya-dhvansri* were taken unto the bosom of the elite, while others like *Bhairon-bahar, Eman-Bilawal* remained to prove the unique virtuosity of certain families. There are few species in Hindustani music which are anthropologically pure, though the Ustads are always swearing by purity. Tagore demolished this myth of 'purity' by the very principle of the growth and the very practice of the art of music. Objectively, that principle had remained long in the dark and at last became radio-active. In this way, a large number of new species or *Raginis* were sponsored by him. Their survival value has since then been tested. Modern compositions are built on them.

The third period marks the consummation of Tagore's experiments. The choice before him was clear: either he should remain content with what he had achieved in the way of new combinations of melodies, wait for time to antiquate the opposition to his novelties and allow him to be classed in future with the master-composers, like Tansen or Thyagaraja, or he would push on with the creation of yet other forms, driven by the urge of fresher impulses. A genuine revolutionary that he was, he could not but take the next step forward, even if it were further away from the ambit of the classicist's approval. The drives came from 'folk-songs,' as they were called, but which were sophisticated in their way. Hindustani music was always conscious of their separate existence, and had called them 'Deshi' or 'Artha-sangit'. In other words, they were laden with literary values. They were like the 'native' states where Indians are Indians as they would like to be known by non-Indians. Their stress was on words, and their reference was to devotion and its accessories, love

and its aphrodisiacs, and life with its crude material, and slightly medieval realities. Music as such was a subordinate factor there; only means to ends. In short, the Deshi style had both a popular and a collective appeal in its meaning-side. But it had certain other qualities which the *Marga* or the Durbari style did not possess. Springing from that great protestant movement of the Middle Ages, the Deshi songs partook of the directness of individual approach to the Divine and rejected the help of intermediaries. Therefore, their spirit was congenial not only to Tagore's spirit of dissent but also to his philosophy of life. As a *raga* in the *Marga* style was a generic structure of notes and thus could not be mindful of the individual modes and emotions that a song could convey, a protest against it in the Deshi style would naturally take the line of particularising the generalities of classical modes through words that conveyed specific meaning. Two results ensued from this: First: instead of the prolonged development of a *Raga,* as in *alap* or in *asthayee*, its infinite variety was expressed by Tagore in different compositions, each conforming to the urge of its mood and all being fair to the pronounced differences with other *Ragas*. Thus, for example, instead of *Bhairabi* being spread on one plane and over one stretch of a long period, its multiplicity of forms in improvisations would be specified in a dozen *songs* in the same *Bhairabi*, but differing between themselves in moods and nuances and communicating these distinctions through appropriate words and whatever minor changes in notes they would compel. The second result was the birth of the art of composition as such. No writer of songs in the nineteenth century Bengal, where the contrary could be expected, duly considered the musical value of words or the verbal appropriateness of musical feeling. The heaviest *ragas* had light bodies and the lightest *ragas* had armours of medieval knights. No wonder that the lady of music

remained in the ogre's castle. Tagore released the delicate detenu from internment. His *Todi* and *Malhar* clothed dignified sentiments, and his light songs got their *Khambaj* and *Pilu*. The Bengali language offered difficulties no doubt, but they were surmounted easily by the wizard who had in more than one sense created that language itself. Here came the importance of the Deshi melodic patterns. They demanded simplicity and directness, individual and specific moods, and an upsurge of feeling. Tagore provided them with all that they wanted. If meanwhile they took him away from familiar paths, he could quote music's own history that impels worn-out forms to seek life from the soil or be damned otherwise. Was not Dhrupad as we know it the regional style of Agra and Gwalior? Was not '*Deshi*' itself a classical *Raga*?

In the last phase, Tagore's musical genius discovered new dimensions. Throughout his long career, he had been throwing up musical dramas in which first the members of his family and, later on, the gifted members of the Shanti-Niketan, were rendering him every assistance. From the time that the *Falguni* was staged, Calcutta began to look forward every year to the Shanti-Niketan festivals in which dignified acting, beautiful dresses, and artistic scenes were harmonised by lovely music. India also had her share in the enjoyment of the glory of this mosaic. Here too Tagore's development was striking. What might be called the preponderance of music was controlled by dance and drama into perfect proportions. The organic integrity of *Chitrangada* could hardly be split into its component parts. It was something more than an opera as is usually understood here; the subtlety of its sentiments and the extreme refinement of its lyrics would in any case raise it to a higher level. Within the limitations of Indian music, the drama was fully conveyed. Dance and dresses contributed to the totality of its musical

effect. Indian music at last corresponded, as far as it could, to the subtleties of individual feeling and to whatever conflict it could occasion.

One word of caution: Tagore was no mere writer of songs, as many would wrongly believe. Excepting the very early period, he seldom wrote a poem to be set to music at leisure. Poems and their musical forms came to him *complete,* at one and the same moment. This was possible because he was an executant himself, and of no mean order. The process of fusion was further facilitated by the fact that his poety had met with similar problems and solved them; it had unleashed similar forces in literature; and his music and poetry were both prompted by a common urge to freedom. A composer's final test is the aptness of the fit between form and content. Separately, the musical pattern should have as high a distinction as the poetical; that is to say, each is valuable *per se.* No appraisement of the place of Tagore's compositions in the history of Indian music need take away anything from their individual achievements either as poetry or as musical pattern. Here one can only point out the exquisite workmanship of the latter in the context of the whole composition.

It has been said that Tagore, the composer, could only be a Bengali. The traditions of Artha-Sangeet were there in the *dohas,* the Vaishnava *padavalis,* the Tantrik songs, the *baul,* the *bhatial,* and so on. Tagore used to say that in Bengal nothing could be mechanically repeated. This view, when held by such a man, does not emanate from mere local patriotism. Sociologically, Bengali Culture is the culture of the frontier; hence its pioneering character. That Delhi was far away was one of the reasons why the Darbari style of music could not get a foothold in Bengal. The decay of Delhi made Oudh the centre of its weakened culture, but transformed Bengal into the hub of the economic life of the eastern half of Northern India that included

Assam, Tibet, North Burma and parts of southern China. With the true sight given to commerce, the East India Company selected Calcutta as the eastern mouth of the flow. Broach, Surat and Bombay settlements tapped the Aryavarta, while Madras, Salem, Coconada, Calicut, etc., irrigated the eastern regions and the hinterland below the Vindhyas. These facts of historical and commercial geography are of vital importance in the understanding of the qualitative difference in the hold of Indian traditions upon the respective zones, and consequently, upon the centres and diffusion of Indian music. Maharashtra had little commerce and much politics. Its politics again were charged with memories of resistance. Its nationalism was mainly defensive. It stuck to the older Sanskritic traditions with greater tenacity than Bengal could. Maharashtra renaissance never cut the umbilical cord. The Servants of India, the Deccan Education Society, the Women's University, the Kesari, the politicians from Gokhale to Tilak, the reformers from Ranade to Karve, the vocalists from Balaji Boa to Vaze and Raja Bhaiya, all seem to conjugate Sanskrit roots and verbs. This is the heart of their realism, their broad base in traditions. And may not one add, this also the reason of a certain deficiency in imagination? One cannot think of C. R. Das poring over the pages of Panini in the Alipore Jail; one knows of his great love for Kirtan. On the other hand, one has heard of Tilak writing the *Geeta Rahasya,* a stupendous work of Sanskrit scholarship, inside the jail and coming out a lover of classical songs. Thus, even if one cannot fully explain Tagore by the fact of his birth in Bengal, which, unfortunately, most of his Bengali admirers do by way of compensation, the difference between his attitude towards music and that of the Maharashtrian Bhatkhande, for example, can be partly understood in terms of the difference in the hold of earlier traditions upon the two regions of India, Bengal

and Maharashtra.

V. N. Bhatkhande was born in 1860, graduated in law in 1887 and built up a fair practice in the Bombay High Court. His wife and child died soon after. He left the profession in 1910 to devote himself entirely to his life's work. In the meantime, he had received a sound training in all varieties of classical Hindustani music from Wazir Khan (Rampur), Raoji Boa Belvalkar, the famous Dhrupadiya, and Mohammad Ali, the well-known Kheyalia of Jaipur. He learnt *Sitar* from Ballav Das, the disciple of the famous Jivanji Maharaj. A strong feeling of nationalism, the prevailing confusion in styles, and an urgent desire to bring the riches of *gharanas* to the ears of the public urged him to undertake an all-India tour. He met princes and *ustads*, scholars and loafers, learnt Bengali to read the Geeta-Sutra-Sar, and collected thousands of songs and a large number of manuscripts on the way. Many are the stories of opposition of the *ustads* to this outsider's assault upon their professional secrets, and of his lawyer's feints, inveiglements and cajolery to disarm them. Throughout his life he remained a suspect to the *ustads*. Some expressed open contempt for his works, while others observed an 'armed neutrality'. Yet they ultimately succumbed to what they called his humility, but to what was in reality the pressure of social change. With the princely patrons out, the musicians felt themselves like lost children. When they found that the outsider had reduced the period of training from a lifetime to six years, their economic security was gone. But they soon realised that the same enemy had created an alternative audience, and felt grateful.

Bhatkhande was an active member of the Jnanottejak Mandali of Bombay where he would organise soirees and deliver lectures on music. Subsequently, regular instruction in music was given by him to the members who felt interested. On one such occasion,

the then Maharaja Scindhia met him incognito. Bhatkhande was soon invited to organise a music school at Gwalior. It became the Madhoji School. He was requested to become its Principal. But the shrewd Brahmin refused the offer. The scions of the old *gharanas* were appointed teachers on his recommendation, and began to teach their pupils, but according to his system. The Gaekwad was also duly impressed. The first All-India Music Conference was held at Baroda in 1916. Here a battle-royal was waged between Bhatkhande and his opponents who held that his classification had done injustice to the Srutis, the secret of our melodic system. The victory of Bhatkhande was complete. After that a number of All-India Conferences were held, in one of the Lucknow sessions of which, a resolution was moved to establish a College of Music. The Marris College of Hindustani Music was the consequence. In this work, Bhatkhande received great help from the then Minister of Education, Rai Rajeshwar Bali, and the late Raja Nawab Ali. The Baroda State School had been started earlier. In these three institutions at least 2,000 boys and girls are daily receiving instruction in the foundations of Hindustani Music. The Calcutta University has also adopted his system. But its scientific rigour has been watered down to suit the soul of Bengal. Otherwise, it is his pedagogics that is regnant in Northern India.

Bhatkhande was more than a missionary of the art of music. There have been few scholars like him. The list of Bhatkhande's books is as formidable as their quality is high. *Srimal-lakshya Sangit* in Sanskrit, *Sangit-Paddhati* in four volumes, the *Kramik* series in five for the five years' course he contemplated, the *Gita Malika* in twenty-two parts, the *Lakshana-Geeta-Sangraha* in which he showed his abilities as a composer of merit, and the *Abhinaba-Raga-Manjari*, are his major works. He edited Pundarik Vittal's treatises, Venkata-

mukhi's *Chaturdandi-prakasika,* Hriday Narayan's *Hriday Kantuk* and *Hriday-Prakasa*, Lochan's *Rag-Tarangini* and Srinivas's *Rag-tattva-bibodh.*. Commentaries on *Sangeet-Darpan* and the Swaradhyaya chapter of the *Ratnakar* were also published by him. They are all in Marathi, Hindi or in Sanskrit. Only three essays are in English, those masterly surveys of the system of music of Northern India from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. As if that was not enough, Panditji would take classes and conduct examinations so long as he was physically able. On the Kalyan *thāt* alone, he once gave in Lucknow ten lectures of more than an hour each. He was one of the greatest Indologists that the writer knows of. A few words on his system are necessary.

After he had collected about three thousand pieces from the members of well-known families, he reduced the airs into twelve unities of structure or *thāts.* This was a departure from the usual classification into six *ragas* and thirty-six *raginis.* His construction is rational for the following reasons (apart from the resolution of the confusion which six faithful and devoted *raginis* would cause by being tied to their single husband of a *raga*): (1) It is empirical in being based on (*a*) the agreed elements in the actual execution of the *ragas* and *raginis* by experts, and (*b*) only those *raginis* which are usually demonstrated by them, not more than sixty in number, out of their pretentious repertoire of hundreds and the permutational possibilities of thousands. (2) It starts from the Bilawal scale in which all notes are pure, and passes on to *thāts* with one, two, three and four Vikrit notes in gradations of complexity and difficulty in mastering. (3) It gives a sensible explanation of the usual assignation of *ragas* and *raginis* to fixed periods of day and night by breaking up the full scale from the *madhyam,* thus divulging the correspondence between the morning and the evening melodies in the

lower and the upper half respectively. This is the essence of Bhatkhande's theory of Sandhi-rag-prakas. How one scale shades off into another is a corollary to the above. Further, (4) it has a notation that can be learnt by the tyro. Tagore's notation is simpler, but its simplicity is mainly with reference to the subject matter. Bhatkhande's notation enables one to easily catch the nuances, the twists and the shifts in weight, without which Indian music is a verbal exercise. In the words of the songs in the Lakshya-Sangit series are disclosed the essential features of the *raga-rupa*, its ruling notes, and peculiarities of ascent and descent, its key-phrases, and the governing spirit. Not all the compositions attain to poetry, but they are all clever. Nobody would put Bhatkhande, the poet, by the side of even a second-class poet of Bengal or Gujerat. His strong point was that he knew the demands of music upon words, while our literary artists seem to be ignorant of them even when they quote Pater. (Hard consonants and compounds for *mirh* and soft vowels for *gamak* are their common sins). Each effort of Bhatkhande, therefore, served the interests of the new elite, if they chose to care. Today, classical music has ceased to be a closed preserve for the feudal order and the upper classes, and anybody with some Hindi and a little Marathi for the *Kramik* series and the *Paddhati* can acquire a workable knowledge of the important *ragas* in our system If he cannot become a musician he can at least 'debunk' the high and the mighty. From Bhatkhande also flowed a rich stream of musical scholarship. Unfortunately, the schools that have worked under his inspiration have not produced many students, who can transmute their knowledge into acts of joy. But his idea was to send them to the reputed masters for the finishing touch. Meanwhile, the race of masters is dying.

It has been held that between Tagore's and Bhat-

khande's individual pressures the closed elite-group of *ustads* has been broken. But individual achievements, great as they are, would not have been sufficient if the set-pattern of the princely-patron—-courtly-ustad—courtier-audience had not been considerably loosened by the middle class who formed the Indo-British substitute. At long last, we have begun to find classical music inside the pure domestic environment and respectable young men and women taking up music as a profession. Though Bhatkhande himself was more than a revivalist, his influence has been in that direction. Even in Bengal, where Tagore rules, young composers find Bhatkhande's work handy and put Bengali words upon his notations and cross them with Tagore's music, *Kirtan, Bhatial* and A. P. Sen's *Thumri*.. The result can be well guessed. Which compels one to make an uncharitable but a true comment that while Bhatkhande's gross influence has been towards disciplined advance in taste for the classics, and no creation please, Tagore's has been towards confusion in the name of artistic execution. Yet, Tagore, who ran away from every form of artificial restriction that a foreign culture had devised, imposed upon himself the most rigorous and obstinate *tapasya* of his own throughout the long sixty years of his creative period, a rigour of the Rishis of old. That the *tapasya* in him has been missed in Bengal is due to that province's social context. That the adventure which is the impulse behind the continuity of Indian culture has not been seized in Bhatkhande's mandated territories is similarly traceable to the slower rate of mobility of the middle class there. Tagore shot into the soil to resuscitate the dying Bhishma; Bhatkhande uttered *mantrams* by his bedside. Tagore knew the social strength of art, Bhatkhande was conscious of the persistence of traditions in art. Yet their influences have met; and those among the public who are interested in the cause of music as a social agency have gained by that confluence. Their

number is not, cannot be, large so long as the social structure is what it is. These two great men seem to have a long wait before them. Their immediate impact is appreciable, but it is nothing to what it can be.

Vishnu Digambar was a great singer and an excellent teacher. His disciples are all over Northern India and Bombay, and some of them are genuine artists. His Gandharva Vidyalaya has its headquarters in Bombay, but his school is really peripatetic. It is not strange that Vishnu Digambar's popularity with the public should have rested on his Bhajan and his religious personality. He had a sound training, a grand voice, dignity, and dramatic qualities. Yet his social significance is that of a carrier.

In Madras, we do not know of any such personality who can be taken as a symbol of musical renaissance. The race of creative giants seems to have been exhausted. What we find instead are musical commentaries, chairs in music, text-books, new editions of old texts, academies and a quarterly of high quality. The clear-cut difference between the high and the low in music persists, though the fissure in tastes is not as deep as it was elsewhere in India some time ago. Standards of appreciation are much higher in the South than in the North. Successful men in Madras, however, evince the usual predilections towards devotional music. The net result is a loosening, but not a falling into parts, of the traditional taste. Whatever modern Madras has touched has been converted into legalism to compilation and journalism, just as the Bengali touch has inflated everything into high falutin, a humid, turgid, tropical eloquence. Madras is many, but the tragic unities are seldom broken; Bengal is still one, but hers is the looseness of the stream of consciousness.

Instrumental music has been less susceptible to change than the vocal. It just disappeared before the harmonium, the authentic bastard of Indo-European

culture. Until recently, wedding presents to the bride had to include an 'organ', as it was called. But it had the supreme merit of serving the then social purpose in music, viz., tickling without training, and catering without cost to, the *bourgeois* listeners. Bhatkhande's schools, and the All-India Radio in one of its lucid intervals, have almost banished it. Today it is used in accompaniment by fond parents of infant prodigies and by devoted lovers of professional women-musicians. We are witnessing a revival of Indian instruments, like *Sarod* and *Surbahar* in the North, and *Veena* and the flute in the South. The thunder of *Pakhwaj* is silenced with the death of Dhrupad. Orchestration remains a problem. The All-India Radio and film companies are trying to solve it. Both have failed, the one lost in the vague desire to do something, and the other, in the maze of imitations of Los Angelic 'background.' Monstrocities made up of a dying note of the flute and a shriek of the violin as when the heroine is renouncing the world in one of her fits of unrequited love, are the usual stock-in-trade of modern Indian orchestration. Only a few recent experiments are sensible.

To summarise the state of musical affairs in India: Dhrupad is gone and has taken the *Pakhwaj* with it. The feudal laziness of its *alap* is unsuited to our vexed ears. But dignity has gone too. Kheyal lives in four important styles, the Kirana of Bombay, represented by the late Abdul Karim's pupils, the Agra style of Fyaz Khan, the Punjabee style of Ghulam Ali, the Gwalior style of Raja Bhaiya and Shanker Pandit. Benares has the largest number of highly competent singers and instrumentalists in Northern India. Thumri has no great exponent today, though it is the base of public taste in Lucknow; the city of music. Everywhere Kheyal is seeking alliance with Thumri. Bihar follows the U.P., though Bhagalpur and Gaya have local pride. Bengal wants to create, but it is creating absurdities

and vulgarising Tagore. The recent attention to folk-styles bears the seeds of promise, but no seed in that tub can sprout. The Rag-Pradhan, only Narad knows what it means, is already a bundle of mannerisms. Bengali music, while it is good enough for the new *bourgeoisie* in other provinces, is insufferable for its cloying sweetness, its protoplasmic invertebrateness. Art can no more be raised above its context than you can lift yourself by your ears.

Three important social agencies have lately been working upon Indian music; gramophones, films and the Radio. The writer does not belong to the category of those who condemn their music without hearing it. They have often produced good music, rescued and unearthed many a dying musician. Who knew before the Bombay station was started that every township in that province could still produce at least one musician who would be the despair of the local incomparable elsewhere? Who knew before the Lucknow or the Trichinopoly station was started that Benares and Trichinopoly still led in music? Through the Radio, comparative judgement has been facilitated and musical interest aroused; children have begun to sing and ladies hum in the lunch hour in which film-music or recorded music is provided. Such music is very often vulgar; and only occasionally, 'pucca gana' is conceded. But vulgarity is so human, in the sense of being socially typical and symbolic; and you cannot humanly ask the ladies not to switch off when the Khan Saheb is on the air. For mental health some women and unemployed men need a mid-day nap with soft music and soothing novels as much as they want evening-dreams in the cinema-hall. In this social sense, the radio, the gramophone and the film companies have brought peace to many houses. It may be the peace of petty *bourgeois* fantasy, the sort of thing which Charlie Chaplin portrayed in Modern Times with love and irony, but no other peace is open

to an average, educated, modern Indian family.

Still these three agencies are not innocents. The film and the gramophone companies are capitalist concerns. Under the pressure of strong financial groups they tend to oust new efforts. And they camouflage their profit motives by referring to public taste. The public taste being what it is, there is no sense in making it worse. It is rank hypocrisy to appeal to demand only when the supply alone is ready to exploit the demand-supply equation. One finds it difficult not to think of hundreds of subjects that may answer the unformulated demand. These subjects may not be as insistent as the love-motive or the snob-urge, but in their totality they may be. A nationalised film or gramophone industry may achieve wonders in India where men and women love nothing more than to hear and see. The All-India Radio is another affair. It has no profit-motive behind it. What is there, however, is pretty bad—neglect of the Government and yet a wooden, bureaucratic control. The truth is that the authorities have not been interested in India and her culture, beyond a certain point. During the war, the A.I.R. lost whatever flexibility it possessed and became a branch of 'Law and Order'. With independence come, the subservience of Broadcasting to 'reasons of State' will have to go if this great agency is to retain its noble function vis-a-vis Indian culture.

This brief and hurried resumé has shown two tendencies in our music, the revivalist and the creative. They were the result of the impact of economic forces upon our traditions. But the economic forces did not come from the soil nor were traditions living and kicking. Both tendencies have thus exhausted themselves. Creative music has become a literary re-hash, and revivalist music is the talk of the horse-dealer who has eaten off the hind-legs of a donkey and wants to pass it as a

thorough-bred. The revolutionary potencies of both seem to have lost themselves in the sands which separate the middle class from the rest of the people. It is only when some young men and women by the strength of their consciousness and intimacy with the life of the people have sought to conquer that social distance that the stream has begun to trickle again. Some of the musical experiments in the ballet-form one hears in the culture-conferences organised by various student-groups and the People's Theatre squads in recent years are valuable indeed. They augur well for Indian culture, because they have an original relation to its constitution and to the need for its reconstitution. Unfortunately, for Indian culture, the I.P.T.A. is in the bad books of the present authorities for its alleged domination by the Communist party and its ideology. Some of its shows were banned by a provincial Government. But one wonders since when did Indian culture begin to fear the foreign and the exotic, the atheist and the materialist, the critical, the Utopian and Speculative Reason? Such fear, apart from its being antagonistic to the reconditioning of Indian culture, is repugnant to India's spirit. Which, however, does not mean that all I.P.T.A. attempts are achievements. Some of them are crude and loud, over-simple and openly didactic, if not propagandist. Yet, by and large, they are in the right direction, viz., that of social purpose, away from the blind alley of Art for Art's sake into which modern Indian Art and Letters had been softly led by an anarchic view of life and society.

CHAPTER VII

REVIVAL OF FINE ARTS

It is not the writer's intention to discuss the fundamentals of Indian art. More competent men have done this job with scholarship and insight. Indian writers, and a few Europeans also, have introduced a fair dose of enthusiasm into their appraisement. Usually, two claims are made on behalf of Indian art: (1) Its view-point is so distinct from that of every other style in the world that one might describe the position as Indian Art versus the rest.[1] The argument is on the score of a complete severance from realistic delineation. If one goes by the pure theory of Indian aesthetics which takes its cue from the Aitareya Brahmana VI, 27,[2] then the creative process dictated by the texts is pitched in such a high key that it appears to be unique. On the other hand, examples of Indian art, at their aesthetic best, are not above conveying forms less than the angelic, and in the manner appropriate to them. Even the earlier Ajanta contains pieces which could be called concessions to the 'humanity' of the world around their makers.[3] The little monkey alone could disprove the angels, and many will be on the side of the monkey, in art, at least. Then, again, this claim to be angelically unique must needs exclude one or two styles, particularly the Mughal portraits, birds and beasts. Indian art is not a purely Hindu concern, and its history is a composite affair made up of diverse traditions in some of which gods and angels do not set the type. But certainly the Hindu ones dominate in painting, mainly because Islam was generally opposed to painting as such. (2) Though the view-point is not peculiar to India, it alone is worthy of the Indian awakened to his heritage.

The arguments range from the power and economy of traditions to the superiority of spiritual values. But Dr. A. K. Coomarswamy has established the similarity between the Indian and the Chinese discipline and vision,[4] and sought even a close parallel in the doctrines of medieval and early Christian, even pre-Christian, mystics.[5] In regard to our duty towards the view-point there is unanimity among scholars and lovers.[6] Their position is somewhat like this; we have been a spiritual race, and a resurgent India can abdicate her spirituality at her peril; Indian art is a store of spiritual values, so let us keep it safe. It is not very clear from the scholarly writings how the store has been actually preserved and the accounts of stock kept. Only a vague feeling of traditional continuity is conveyed, excepting by writers like Drs A. K. Coomarswamy and Abanindra N. Tagore[7] who show the connexion between the older forms and the living ones of folk-art, such as *alpana*, (*rangoli*—Gujerat, *Kolam*—South, *Jhunti*—Orissa), or by a seer[*] like Sree Aurobindo who shows the whole process from the concrete level of national discipline to the spiritual. The fact of the matter is that we are not actively and historically conscious of the earlier traditions, myths, legends, and symbols. 'We', of course, are the middle-class Indians of today among whom an ignorance of the stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, not to speak of the meaning of the lotus-motif or of *a mudra*, is a part of culture. But outside our rank, *people in the villages are still responsive.* Every year hundreds and thousands of earthen images are made all over India for community-worship during the auspicious days, and each such image is made according to traditions. Usually, the bigger ones have their auras painted with divine figures, each true to type. Aesthetically, they are not satisfying, but they demonstrate the living nature of the Indian view of art among the potters and priests, if not with the elite.[8] Similarly, in Cochin and Travancore

and Malabar, i.e. Kerala, dances and dramas are performed on almost every occasion in the villages by the *Chakkyaras* and the *Nambudris*, castes for the purpose, and the illiterate peasant-audiences are so well aware of the legends, even when they come through Sanskrit dramatists like Kalidasa and Bhasa, that only the very complicated *mudras* and poses are missed by them.[9] So, if traditional culture is no longer an attribute of the new middle class but is still related to the life of the people, then the move away from Western, non-Christian, representational art[10] to some form of the ideational Hindu type, which marked the beginning of the revival of Fine Arts more than three decades ago, was one in the desirable direction. How far the move was prompted by book-knowledge is debatable. Ronaldshay reports that the Tagore brothers had not heard of the Shastras when they started the movement.[11] Dr A. N. Tagore has said that his eyes were opened by a volume of Mughal miniatures. Probably, the urge lay somewhere between discontent and intuition. Which was not enough, as we know from what has happened to that movement in these thirty-five years.

Then there are the Indian rebels who have complaints against Indian art and its outlook. In their opinion, it is weak, monotonous, lyrical, metaphysical, and unsuited to this industrial age. Besides these rebels, whose cerebrations have not yet risen to the level of a systematic exposition, we have a few artists who practise on the Western style and appreciate the Indian. Their catholicity also awaits the consciousness and formulation of general principles.

From these three attitudes we may deduce the following social facts: (1) that, by and large, appreciation is less today than what it was,[12] (2) that it is still greater in the countryside than in the urban areas, (3) that the middle classes in the cities are blind, and that (4) the revolt starts from certain sections of the

latter group. On these bases, new movements in the Fine Arts have to be judged. Movement includes creation *and* appreciation, production *and* sale. In other words, it is a social process.

Though we are not concerned with the history of the Government Schools of Art, in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lahore and Lucknow, or of the various museums in the cities, we may notice that the Government of India, generally, have been stirred into assisting them by Whitehall, right from the Great International Exhibition of 1851,[13] to the Empire Exhibition of 1935. Sir George Lloyd, who, according to one version, was to Indian painting in Bombay what Curzon was to Indian archaeology, had a similar inspiration. The decorations of the India House in London and of the Viceroy's House and other buildings in Delhi are in the same line of patronage under official and European direction. Before Mukul De (Calcutta), Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhury (Madras), Samar Gupta (Lahore), and Asit K. Haldar (Lucknow), there was no Indian principal in any of the Government Schools. It is not suggested that modern Indian Fine Arts need not be grateful to the European heads. Calcutta had Havell and Percy Brown, Bombay had its Griffiths. These three gentlemen contributed to the revival in their own ways; the first by a deep understanding of the nature of Indian art and his courage to invite an outsider, Dr A. N. Tagore, to work as Vice-Principal with full liberty of action; the second by his keenness and sympathy; and the third by bringing Ajanta within the knowledge of his students who would often camp near the caves to copy the murals. But they are only three out of a long list of British officials who did all they could to spoil their students' taste. Modelling from life, sketching from life, copying from spurious masters, Leighton, Alma Tadema, Poynter, and Marcus Stone, Watts jostling with Raphael and Murrillo on the walls, the Principal hobnobbing with the Gover-

nor and Rajahs and Maharajas, ex-students serving as drawing masters on thirty rupees per month and practising homeopathy to supplement their income—such was the picture of the Arts Schools' activities. The curriculum was drawn in such a way that the arts were separated from the crafts, with the obvious intention of attracting young men of respectable families to the former and driving the artisan's sons into the latter. In Bombay, for example, the Reay School of Crafts was separated early. Stipends for scholars varied accordingly. The administrative direction was weak and confused. If the head of the school was a strong man, he could have his way in doing nothing for art and everything in the way of management. Besides, the Governments did not know whether an Arts School really belonged to the Industries or to the Education Department. They put it under the charge of both. Even today, a similar situation obtains in certain provinces with the result that the Principal's work is tied down by red tape. Nothing happened to the crafts either, no new design worth speaking of, and little revival. Art-museums, as such, hardly existed. The whole thing had to wait before the citizens took it up themselves. The Bombay Art Society was no doubt formed in 1888, but it really began to function from 1910. An Art Society was started by G. N. Tagore in Calcutta in 1907, with Lord Kitchener as the president. It came to be well known as the Indian Society of Oriental Art. Out of its thirty original members, only five were Indians. The Europeans had been intrigued by the samples of Indian art at the Delhi Durbar. The first exhibition was soon organized, and it became a sensation. It contained pictures by the two Tagores, Nanda Lal Bose, S. N. Ganguly, Asit Kumar Haldar and Venkatappa. Subsequent exhibitions attracted crowds from the High Court and Clive Street. The Government gave a grant of Rs. 10,000 and the *Rupam,* in its days the best art-journal in Asia, was

started. The Society got a habitation, and opened classes. Its patrons and workers were cosmopolitan, though the inspiring genius was that of the two Tagores. The intellectual aspect was in charge of O. C. Ganguly and Woodroffe, to name two only, while Coomarswamy expounded its doctrines from outside.[14] A 'national' movement had at last appeared. Gradually, it spread over India (minus Bombay), and Ceylon.

One erroneous assumption in regard to it should be removed before we proceed to discuss its social bearings. It was *not* the Bengali school of painting that was born in Calcutta. The artists included other provincials; the sympathizers and patrons were Englishmen, Germans, Japanese, Indian princes; the subject matter was Hindu and Buddhist myths and legends, figures from the early history of India, Mughal kings and queens; the technique was not Bengali, as no Bengali technique was existent apart from that of the *patuas* and the potters—in fact, it was eclectic, pastiche, if you did not like it; even the pigments and the brushes had to be imported from outside. The only Bengali touch, *per se*, came in the Chaitanya cycle (K. N. Majumdar, particularly), in the landscapes that were few in number, and barring those of Gaganendra Nath were not much to be proud of, and in a certain delicate 'lyrical' feeling which was so 'Bengalese'. The probable grounds for the latter opinion were the bodies of women in the pictures. It is not known how exactly they were identified as Bengali. For aught we can see, Gujerati and Malabari women with a little modification in dress look very much like their Bengali sisters. In many cases, the women belonged to the primitive people, failing whom, to the princely order. The dress and the ornaments of princesses were Indian, and not typical of the Bengal of those days. In fact, none of the spectators had seen the women of Ajanta, Bagh and Sigirryiah, and all felt the urge of recognition. They thus put the women of the new pictures

into the Bengali household. Besides, women in India are associated with delicacy, and Bengal with lyricism, devotion and mysticism. The circle of argument was complete. And yet, there was something shrewd in that feeling, only it had nothing to do with art. To put it bluntly, non-Bengalis loved and hated their own middle class sentimentality when they saw its exhibition in line and colour, and transferred their love and hatred elsewhere where it fitted. By and large, the impression made by the array of pictures with the same motifs year in and year out on the minds of those who hated more than they loved was that vitality was lacking in the seminal conception of the movement, that, technically, it was convention without conviction, and that although its direction was not quite towards the caves, it could only be into the ivory tower, unless a miracle happened. The 1908 movement which started in Bengal 'opened the eyes of India,' as Haldar puts it, but the lids were leaden.

The Bombay revival[15] came in the twenties. The Prince of Wales' visit, the decoration of the Durbar Hall in the Government House, and Sir George Lloyd's sympathy were the immediate urges; they were subsequently supplemented by the need for decorating Delhi and putting up a good show for Bombay in the Empire exhibitions. The grand result was the Indian Room in which the walls and the ceiling were decorated in the 'traditional' manner. Whatever might be the merit of the pictures of the Zodiac or of Agriculture, Industry, Sculpture, etc. it was undeniable that Griffith's ideas were being partly realized. The Bombay revival was chiefly mural. The Ganesh procession could not have been painted by one who did not owe allegiance to Ajanta.[16]

Only a culture-enthusiast would discover a renaissance in Bihar and the Punjab, though Patna and Lahore have two of the finest museums in India.

The Patna *kalam* is dead, and no new *kalam* has sprung up. There are also more patrons of the Fine Arts in Patna, among the lawyers particularly, than anywhere in Northern India, barring Benares. Chughtai ruled the Punjab before Amrita Sher Gil's return to India. Her premature death was a tragedy. In the U. P. we have the Kala Bhawan at Benares, and the Government Art School at Lucknow. The function of the first is that of a store-house of masterpieces, while that of the latter was once of a radiating centre. So long as Rai Rajeswar Bali was the Minister of Education, the Lucknow school received a good deal of support in money and publicity, and the teachers could teach. Since then, it has wilted under inattention. Recently, the Allahabad Municipal Board has shown commendable interest in Fine Arts and Archaeology. Its museum is still a collection. About the U. P. Universities' share in stimulating interest in Fine Arts the less said the better. In Madras, the situation has improved in recent years. Debi Prasad Chowdhury has put new life into his school, and the work of his pupils shows vigour. The Andhra impulse seems to be exhausted, however. Dr Cousins has arranged the Art Gallery in the Travancore state. Hyderabad is generous in preservation; and so is Jaipur, which has a School of Art to its credit.

It is not a pleasant prospect. The modern Indian Renaissance is practically over, as the appointment of professors of Fine Arts here and there definitely proves. And yet, there is plenty of talent everywhere, and appreciation is not yet defunct in the countryside; also the number of buyers of pictures has certainly increased, and the output is more. Dr Coomarswamy writes: "It may be said without fear of contradiction that our present poverty, quantitative and qualitative, in works of art, in competent artists, and effective connoisseurship is unique in the history of the world. . . ." He calls the latest exploits, 'tawdry', 'meretricious'. He is not, how-

ever, equally clear about the reasons of this decadence. He seems to suggest that our ignorance of Indian symbols and traditions and our acquired falsely foreign taste are responsible for such a sorry state of affairs.[17] It is difficult to disagree with him on these two points. But he also writes: "Now the economic factor is practically without bearing on the issue." It is public taste, of the rich and the poor alike, which is Dr Coomarswamy's villain of the piece. But why should the public taste be what it is? It was not like this before, as he himself has stated elsewhere. The explanation is neither solely with the public, which should not be equated with the people, nor merely with taste, which is not just the snob's itch. It is elsewhere, as the following argument will try to show.

The contents of modern pictures are mostly mythological. One feels after visiting the shows that gods and goddesses of the Puranas have taken a holiday from Heaven and come outing here. Divinities are chosen by individual temperament, the tender ones being usually preferred to the tough. Thus Siva is seldom the destroyer, but the devoted husband who is incidentally a Yogi, and Krishna is in his elements after giving up the reins. Then the Pauranic kings come, followed by the Buddha, Asoka, Chaitanya, and other saints. Characters from literary works like Shakuntala, Meghaduta, the Jatakas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Omar Khayyam are equally popular. The incidents in their lives are usually the human ones, seldom tragic or comic, but invariably melodramatic. Though the gods and the kings are human, actual men and women seldom come in the picture. Portraiture is not fashionable, and for human figure the artists first go to the primitive and the villager and then to the beggar and the vagabond, i.e. anywhere except to the members of their own class. Landscape is rare. These are the common features of the subject matter of modern Indian painting.

Let us note that the pieces are mythological, *not* symbolical, *nor* allegorical, except in Bombay. "A symbolical expression is one that is held to be the best possible formula by which allusion may be made to a relatively unknown 'thing', which referent, however, is nevertheless recognized or postulated as 'existing'."[18] The use of symbols posits a personal conviction about the referent *and* a social agreement. A cross on the road has the latter, for the motorists, but not the former. Similarly, the rock is Mr T. S. Eliot's personal conviction, but it has no basis of common agreement among Indian readers. In such cases, the symbol is only a sign. Modern Indian paintings are signatures, from this point of view. Nor are the Bombay murals in any way better. They are supposed to be allegories, but neither in the Christian nor in the Indian way. They are not 'images of the mind of god', as St. Thomas Acquinas would have it, nor are they the bodily shapes formed of Maya which the highest Lord may, when He pleases, assume in order to gratify his devout worshippers, as Sankaracharya put it once for all. The Bombay murals are only pictorial vehicles of desirable qualities, sermons in paint. Abstract these qualities are, because they have been abstracted from the social referent, and didactic the treatment is by the very need of covering the lack of conviction by assertion. Such being the case, when the sign is taken for the symbol and allegory ceases to be an integral part of the collective unconscious, in other words, when the social acceptance of the referent and the terms of reference is absent, we can only afford to be sentimental and press for a reference to a recognisable reality, as in naturalistic representation, personification, etc.[19] Now it is obvious that both for conviction and agreement, a certain homogeneity of social structure is essential. Symbols and allegories must be conveyed to be seized. Unless the provider and the provided have a common context of living, they cannot have

the necessary attitude of *sraddha,* i.e. respect. So it is not the deficiency of *sraddha* which is the *primary* reason for our lack of taste, as Dr Coomarswamy would have it. It is this presence of two types of living, one with some private conviction and no agreement, and the other having no conviction and a conventional agreement just strong enough to resist an encroachment upon its peace, which should rightly account for our poverty in appreciation and creation.

We know that the character of mythology is basically organic inasmuch as it partakes of the collective life in the social struggle with nature. In its earliest forms it is non-dogmatic, and non-religious too. But it is soon annexed by the religious leaders and priests in the interests of law and order. Thus, while a knowledge of the Absolute is for the initiate and the advanced, the Pauranic legends are good enough for the rest. This division reflects the division of society into two parts, one that may afford to make the most of faith, and other that lives by it as a substitute-mode. Still the social context is not torn, and give and take continues so long as no new modes of living occasioned by new processes of material production, i.e. the effects of fresh conquests of nature and their utilization, come to intervene. All that may happen, if the same mode of living is prolonged, is the thinning out of the social relationships. Mythologies are revived to coat such an attenuation. Occasionally, a rebirth of mythology takes place in the wake of a religious revival or counter-reformation. This is referred to by some art-historians as 'ups and downs', or cycles.[20] It only means that the belief in the immutability of that social order which subordinated mythology to religion dies hard, and that its holders will do anything to preserve their hold. But the resurgence of mythology in modern Indian culture has a few additional features. We have noted how the middle classes are not the genuine ones, how they are divorced from

the native traditions, and how the sense of social frustration haunts them. Such men must search for substitute-situations of gods and goddesses behaving like men and women cast in the heroic mould. If the substitution is patent, then mythology becomes an allegory, too simple for the C.I.D., even. So an extra dose of compensation is there in this recrudescence of mythology. It is not the authentic stuff; it is not the revolutionary seeking for roots, because the social classification of today is not an emergent of the social classification of old, and also because the middle-class is no class having a consciously revolutionary role to play.

The first corollary to the above is that the gods and goddesses and the heroes and heroines of the new mythology should be made to look a little more human, have a little more of 'character', should speak to us more or less in our language. Thus it is that Krishna, Radha, Siva, Parbati, the more reputed of the pantheon, Buddha and Asoka, are all too, too human—sensual, in another manner of speaking. If the swan is to be a real one, then Saraswati cannot remain a goddess; she will be a college girl, demure, pretty, capable of a mischief or two, but she will not do it; if the Buddha is doing penance, the ribs must come out; and if Krishna is playing with his flute or robbing milkmaids of their dress, well then, Krishna should pour melting music through his flute and behave as boldly as the Indian Penal Code will permit. Technically, it involves a pseudo-realism in the name of the human. Humanity of this type is the creeping paralysis of modern Indian art. It just reflects the mental health of the middle-class.

The fluctuations of landscape-painting and portraiture in the history of art are well-known.[21] Landscape is a modern invention. In the early periods, the function of nature was purely decorative; in the medieval period, ideogrammatic or ideational. The sentiment which can visually consider external Nature arises by the eight-

eenth century. With the appearance of the sky *as such,* real landscape begins. Such is the general outline given by Laprade.[22] P. Sorokin, however, distinguishes two types of *paysage,* the ideational and the visual, and accepts the above conclusions only in regard to the visual type. Actual correlations between the pattern of social economy and the emergence of visual *paysage* cannot be established, but generally speaking, the opinion may be hazarded that it is only under conditions which are created by the new relations between man and Nature that the latter in virtue of its own right can force its attention upon the former. When Nature was the bestower of gifts and of curses, its elementality had to be recognized as super-human. The corresponding treatment was what was proper to a powerful outsider who had come to stay. But some kind of understanding was soon established; living was becoming less precarious; the element of stability out of the mass of instability was getting bigger; for years crisis would not come; and fear gave place to social sentiments worthy of the tribal life. The art of this period was slowly moving towards the ideational. It was the feeling of stability, generated by a long period of social ordering after unsettled living and by the actual economy in energy in getting a living out of agriculture as contrasted with pasturing and hunting, which was the immediate background of the ideational art. There was then no question of fresh conquests of nature, but only of slight improvements in agricultural technique. The question of change in art forms arises in all its intensity and becomes *persistent* when the social pattern of living is apprehended by a large number of people to be unstable and the need is felt for a greater economy. Science or conquest of Nature is *not* the primary urge; change in the social structure is. Once that urge is felt, ideational art, with ideational *paysage* as its corollary, cannot stay. This happened in Europe in the nineteenth century, with

the usual lag between one country and another occasioned by the different tempos in industrialization. The contempt of the masters of the Renaissance for landscape is as well known as that of the Impressionists' preoccupation with it from the second half of the nineteenth century. The ups and downs[23], therefore, are only minor movements, incidents of local crises, that come within this larger development.

Both the proportionate scarcity of landscapes and their steadily increasing ratio in modern Indian painting can be understood in the light of the above consideration. We have not yet passed from agricultural economy to industrial economy, but we are passing. The hang-overs of ideational landscape, say of the Rajasthan school, with its daub of blue and gold for the sky, a highly stylized tree or two for the forest, a rock for a hill, a dark slate-coloured mass for clouds, a crane for the rains, a spray of flowers for spring, are still there, no doubt, but the suggestiveness has disappeared. Man, city, sentiment, naturalism have come instead. If the landscape is rural, there must be a village-woman in all her patent crudeness, with a load on her back and skirt tucked up. If it is of the city, the look is directed beyond it towards the outlying village. And the seasons display all their wealth in the pictures, withholding nothing, like the new rich. The middle-class nostalgia is all over our landscapes, few as they are. Their increase connotes the invasion of 'visual' art.

Portraiture is rarer than landscape. Its rise elsewhere is associated with the periods of aggressive individuality and of 'character'-formation in the sense used by Smiles in his *Self-Help*, that is to say, the success of one against odds in terms of material power to rise in the social scale. The Mughal portraits are of vigorous noblemen, able warriors and of chieftains who came up when the Empire started declining, i.e., after Akbar and Jehangir. The Rajput portraits are ideational. In

the nineteenth century, some good portraits were drawn by unknown artists for the founders of new families. These ancestors rose from nowhere and became rich first through their contacts with the foreign concerns and then by landownership. But by the third quarter, the descendants of these gentlemen had lost their individuality, and photographs were sufficient for their flabby complacencies. The portraiture that we find occasionally in the Exhibitions is of the twentieth century 'great men'. Portraits of princes are seldom drawn, and of the 'types' seldom sold. When the middle-class standard has smudged all 'character' out, photographs can easily do the work of oil.

The argument from the point of view of content is further advanced by three other facts which are closely connected with the socio-economic background: (*a*) the separation of Crafts from Fine Arts, (*b*) the display of names of artists, and (*c*) the poetic names given to the pictures. Throughout the medieval period, in Europe and in Asia, arts and crafts were an integral process. Christian, Hindu and Chinese texts are very clear on this point. Schoolmen would divide human efforts into the sphere of Action and Making.[24] Prudence was for the former, and Art was for the latter. Within the sphere of Making, the only consideration was that of making well. Craftsmen in their guilds were 'artists', and 'artists' had their shops manned by members of the guilds. The two functions separated with the decay of guilds and the rise of new patrons. Guilds decayed and new patrons flourished when the feudal order was being displaced by the industrial. In modern India, the guilds and monasteries do not exist, and the industrial revolution is too young to throw up a leisured class who can conspicuously waste money in buying pictures and patronizing Art. The Indian patrons are those who can just afford to feel superior with a few paintings in their drawing rooms otherwise filled with cheap uphol-

stery. Similarly, nearly all art, religious and secular, was once anonymous.[25] The Durbar paintings of the Mughals would bear names, but not the Rajasthani, the Basoli, the Sikh or the Kangra, much less to speak of the Ajanta and the Bagh. Chinese and Japanese paintings would no doubt be signed, but then the signatures were a vital part of the picture itself. The calligraphic ideogram balanced the pictorial ideogram.[26] Signature in modern Indian painting is at once a token of the social confusion in which guilds have lost their function without being supplanted by a fresh economic organization and a new class. It also indicates the effort of the artist as an individual to escape by proclaiming his little status and self as loudly as he can. Such a self is not personality. The talk about individuality, that one so often hears from the lips of modern Indian artists, is due to the sense of inferiority, the offspring of social frustration.

From names on paintings to the nomenclature of paintings is an easy step. So far as we know, the *Ragini*-pictures were the first large body of paintings to have couplets attached to them.[27] The habit caught on when illuminated manuscripts were fashionable. But it was confined to the art of illustration. In Bengal, the practice was facilitated by the existence of Tagore's poems in which both the pictorial and the dramatic elements (of a certain type) could be easily found. These poems depicted the most fugitive moods, and in plenty. Besides, the poet Tagore was a relation of the artists, the Tagore brothers. The latter have fully acknowledged their indebtedness to the former. So the poetic material was ready at hand, and the rest was a memory for apt quotation. The writer remembers how Dr. A. N. Tagore would fix a name to a picture before the exhibition was opened. He would do it with a chuckle, arguing that otherwise it would not sell. In other words, he knew the 'lyric' nature of the demand. The middle-

class want pleasant sentiments in pictures *and* poems, at one and the same time, and let them have them for thirty rupees! The demand for sentiments in pictures sprang from the same source as the demand for sentiments in literature and music, viz. the will to forget the original, historical denial and the consequent discontent.[28] When the demand was met, a farewell was given to the ideational art. From now on, modern Indian painting would tend more and more towards representation and humanity. But it would still not be fully visual and sensate. For that Indian society would have to wait.

Jamini Roy's and Rabindranath's paintings are to be put in the above perspective. Roy's register a dissatisfaction with pastiche and a thirst towards the ideational. The first is interpreted as his mannerism, and the second as love of the primitive and the archaic.[29] Both interpretations are wrong. Jamini Roy is only in search of the values *before* they were deflected. So he goes back to folk-art. It is not a backward movement in time, but a plunge into purer values. Probably, it is not proper to call his art folk-art either. It is art of the *pre*-visual stage, before physical eyes displaced insight of the *gnana-netra*. In this search Roy gets the primitive no less than the Christian and the Vaishnava values of art. Those who dismiss him as an imitator of Kalighat *pat* style cannot explain his series of Christ and the Vaishnav, his magnificent Peasant, and his numerous dolls. His inner vision has not yet seized the spacious, or the oceanic, but it has struck upon the fundamental of art, as Indians have understood it so far.[30]

Tagore, on the other hand, is visual. His is an extension of Impressionism[31] in one sense, viz. in what followed it by way of reaction. Impressionism was the blind alley of realism, and artists turned back to break up the spectrum of vision. This was done in a number

of technical ways, and also by a re-orientation of the sight. The last led the artists to the primitives. But essentially, it was a drive, a search for the wholeness that is in innocence. Tagore is in this line of seekers. Therefore, Tagore's visualness is that of a child. Give a pencil to a child, and the pencil only "aids in the birth of a line of which he knew nothing, and which was waiting to be born. This line was not foreseen by the mind. On the contrary, in the infinite number of possible figures, all that the mind could do was to recognize the particular one which was striving to appear in that particular space, and which was, so to speak, already completely traced and only needed to be made visible." This penetrating statement of M. Bidou is an elaboration of Tagore's own estimate that his paintings were 'salvage-work' of the fittest and the most rhythmical out of the 'perpetual activity of natural selection in lines' in the universe of forms. Obviously, such a sight is insight, not into the 'meaning', but into the play of the rhythm which is meaningless, *a-symbolical,* yet *ideational,* as much as Blake's insight is. Tagore, however, did more than produce the inter-linear pen-play and 'automatic writing' on the margin. He did draw and paint figures of men and beasts that have no counterpart on this earth. Their equals in strength and terror roamed about in the distant ages before men were civilized and animals domesticated. They are in strange contrast to his lyric delicacy. Probably, they came from the unplumbed depths where myths lurk and passions crouch. It is a terrible experience, that of looking at his last pictures. One looks straight into the eyes of the denizens of the dark. Yes, it is the look and the gait that strike first, and last. Tagore's art is visual, in the best reference of the term. No formula can explain, no context hold his genius. He contains both.

In this hasty sketch we have excluded the aesthetic and the technical aspects. The sociology of the move-

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ment has been our sole concern. That the movement has a value is undeniable. It has opened some eyes, and given a certain social status to the artist. Thirty years ago, only the ne'er-do-well would be packed off to the art-school and they would be content with schoolmaster's jobs. We now hear of studios, medals, good posts, parties in their honour, and even a volume or two on their works. A few schools have their teachers in painting and modelling.[32] Women have begun to attend classes in the Fine Arts. But all this is symptomatic and strictly in consonance with the artificial social structure. But what about the movement? Today, its intellectual content is weak; therefore, any conscious elaboration is non-existent; its 'objective correlate' is limited and confused, and therefore, its vision is closed and blurred. Its vitality cannot surpass that of the pattern of living from which it must needs draw.

The recent Bengal Famine, with all its death and de-vitalization, brought some young artists into their first contact with reality. Up till now poverty, disintegration, proletarization were rumours and phrases. Now they shocked, and shocked the artists out of their romantic reformism. Those who have borne the shock well have been producing works of undoubted merit. Such shock-therapy, however, is an extravagant process; and one wonders how the new lease of life can be prolonged for the good of art in India, unless the recovery is stabilized by more economical means, by intellectual conviction, conscious technique, and its mastery. One does not know what steps will a free India take towards Art education; but it is clear that unless the fallacy of first things first be ruthlessly eliminated, Indian culture will remain the luxury of the resurgent new rich.

A separate chapter on modern Indian architecture would have been desirable, if it were possible. A bare mention of its salient features should suffice. Before

the nineteenth century, Indo-European architecture was based upon models with which the various Western traders were familiar in their home-ports in Southern Europe. It was but natural that the factories and warehouses, and later on, the residences, tombs and churches in the new commercial centres, should conform to their European prototypes. When the 'factors' spread themselves out in the countryside, they built fortresses to secure safety for their wealth, and garden-houses to fit in with their prestige and enlarged conveniences in a country with an execrable climate but cheap living. Many of the Indo-European buildings which date from the eighteenth century have their ground-plan mainly fixed by two economic considerations, viz. *(a)* safety for goods and cash in deep vaults, strong rooms and cellars which could also protect the women and the children if they cared to live in India, and *(b)* the luxurious standard of living of the 'nawabs'[33] with their nautch-parties and gorgeous dinners that necessitated large halls, high ceilings and polished floors, loggias and ante-rooms. The servants, who were very large in number, lived in the out-houses. The weather was responsible for the balconies, the large windows and the lattices, and prestige for the portico, while privacy for the begums demanded an inner courtyard in the Indian style. The convents were constructed on principles which were those of the Catholic countries from which many of the traders came. It is also interesting to observe how the nationality of the Western trader determined the type of architecture he built in India. Thus, for example, we have the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danish, the French and the English styles in chronological sequence. Of these, the Portuguese influence penetrated deep. Quite a number of terms for our domestic architecture in daily use today, particularly in Bengal, are Portuguese in their origins.[34] There are, however, few samples of Indo-Portuguese style in civic

architecture. The best example of the religious type is the church at Bandel in Bengal. The Indo-French architecture has a number of large buildings to its credit, e.g. the Constantia at Lucknow and the Martinere School in Calcutta. The first was designed on the Regency model by General Claude Martin, the famous French adventurer and arms manufacturer of Oudh. It is named the Palladian style by Mr Percy Brown. Its immense proportions and fantastic taste were just the thing for the nawabs of Lucknow to imitate. Decadence called unto decadence. The 'germs of a very beautiful composition' that Fergusson detected in the Constantia are overlaid by the crowding of pediments, capitals, arcades and statuary. The Anglo-Indian architecture in its ordering of space and simple dignity was, however, more satisfying. It has no counterpart in any indigenous English style, but it was a genuine adaptation to the climatic needs of India. Some of these buildings are huge strongly-built mansions that have lasted the rigours of the Bengal climate. A few planters' quarters survive, and they are big enough to hold the entire administrative machinery of a district. Technically, the nineteenth century bears witness to the skill of the Indian mason in brick-work and stucco.[35]

So far as large-scale operations in this country are concerned, e.g. the Victoria Memorial, the Delhi and Hyderabad buildings, an attempt at getting at the Indian 'traditions' is noticeable. Usually, it stops at imitation or eclecticism. Domes, minarets and *sikhars* lie cheek by jowl in Anglo-Hindu-Saracenic camaraderie. The princely palaces can afford to be purely Hindu or purely Muslim, unless, of course, an English architect has to be paid to please the powers or the princely whims. But the private buildings of the princes can still be beautiful. No civic architecture in the Indo-British period has the solidity of a medieval palace or a *chhatri* in Central India. And yet, the chief architect of Delhi reported

only the other day that Indian craftsmen were still living and could be trusted. Religious architecture is openly imitative, and of the worst models. Domestic architecture in the cities and the hill stations shows some departure. Its character is purely negative, in the abolition of the purdah and the courtyard. Positively, recent domestic architecture is a corollary to female emancipation. Its contribution to domestic bliss is not as well known as its importance for social gatherings. That is another reason why modern designs are feminine. The real reason, however, is *bourgeois* fantasy. Flats are a modern phenomenon for India. In Calcutta, they are used chiefly by the lower middle class Indians; in Bombay, they are used also by the well-to-do who insist on privacy. Otherwise, they all mean the break-up of Indian family life by the pressure of economic forces operating through women's quarrels[36] and snobbishness known as emancipation. If we take the group of Bombay clerks with an income varying from Rs. 80 to 160 a month,[37] we will not be far from the truth in saying that the rent absorbs anything between 20 to 25 per cent of the income. In other cities the proportion is between 15 to 20 per cent. The lower middle class can only have poor flats inside the city on Rs. 15. If they live in the suburbs, only a little more of accommodation and open air is available, but the cost of transport pushes up the proportion to the city-level. Certain municipalities, improvement trusts and employers have undertaken to build houses for their menial staff, but the rents in every case are higher than those of the shanties and 'chawls' built by private parties. Back-to-back tenements with a dirty lane into which the refuse of both sides is conveniently thrown form the rule. The railway colonies are always better. Upper grade employees have better houses than what they could otherwise engage while the officers' quarters are very roomy and well-appointed. But none would annex

medals in an architectural show. Almost every city of note has a development scheme, and in a few the planning is as scientific as private interests and Corporation-susceptibility will allow. Private companies have also taken it up, but their areas are known as 'Mortgage Streets' in view of the financial arrangements. The middle-middle classes, of the Rs. 200-500 group are the main patrons. A common design is not possible here because of the private 'artistic' tastes of the owner-occupier. Now that communal riots have become fairly popular, there is a tendency for the communities to segregate in their own 'safe' localities, with the result that domes and Buddhist topes need not be harmonized. In the Hindu quarters, Buddhist railings (Sanchi) support Anglo-Indian verandahs. Here design is not separated from the science of building, and the contractor is himself the architect. Only the very well-to-do classes can have a designer. But then, the designer usually draws his own ideas from the garden-cities in Europe or America, while the owner and his wife have their own from the domestic architecture number of the *Studio*. Improvement Trusts and Municipalities cannot enforce anything but a common ground-plan. Ships with decks and portholes in the coastal cities and temples in the inland ones are the usual models for the well-to-do. Like modern furniture, modern domestic architecture does not belong to India. Architects are not to be blamed for this; it is the homelessness of the class that must live in houses. From home to house—that is the social trend which determines the formlessness of domestic architecture. A few palaces and private railway stations, a department of architecture in the Bombay School, a few classes in design here and there, representations to the Government for employing more architects, and even strongly-backed appeals to the public to start a school of Indian architecture, do not make a movement. Of all the arts, architecture is the most

social, and the least progressive in India.

The dance-revival in the last few years reminds one of the early days of modern Indian painting. Public enthusiasm is marked when a dance-troupe visits a town. More articles are being written and more talk indulged on dancing than ever before. In the upper class households, there is always some performer, just as there is at least one detenu in every Bengali Hindu family. Respectable parents today are not above attending dance-shows in the company of their young ones. The movement was started in Shanti-Niketan, taken up by Vallathol in Kerala, and developed by Uday Shankar. It has been further enriched by the discovery of regional styles, e.g. Manipuri, Tanjore, Kathakali, etc. The Kathak style has been the standard of the U.P., with Bhand and Nautanki as auxiliaries. Garba in Gujerat has no parallel elsewhere in its respectability and its almost universal hold. The Chow dance of Orissa has recently come to the fore. India has had an opportunity of witnessing the Pwe of Burma and the Bali *nrittya.* Anna Pavlova and Ruth St. Denis also visited India a few years ago. Today we have a number of competent artistes, men and women, who tour India and outside. Among them one could mention at random Gopinath, Ram Gopal, Leela Sokhi (Menaka) and Mrs Arundale, as typical of their own genre. G. S. Datta's Bratachari movement combines dance with rural reconstruction and social service. Its art-nucleus is the 'martial' folk-dance of Bengal. Nothing surprising in that for those who know the history of the formation of 'martial classes' in the British period.

A few words are necessary for making the requisite distinction between these forms. The Shanti-Niketan dance is operatic, and it is Tagore's dramas, with and without words, that hold the dance. The songs are also Tagore's songs. Naturally, the special quality of Tagore's genius, lyricism, pervades the entire performance.

Each gesture is a mood, each stance a feeling, each posture a sentiment, and the movement is a liquid sentence. Vigour of the epic or the tragic type is not present, but a quiet nervous strength is very much there. At first, the individual dance was prominent, and the dancer's duty was to interpret, that is to say, translate the song-theme by bodily movements, which were usually confined to the hands. Later on—and Tagore was not the man to sit idle—the individual was subordinated to the main theme, and other limbs woke up. Still the songs, so independently beautiful they were, dominated, and thus impeded the growth of dance as an independent feature. This too was eventually controlled, until at last the *Chitrangada* became a perfect piece. The production-side also was considerably improved. In the group-dances, the pictorial element was beautifully joined with the musical. The general criticism against the Shanti-Niketan dance is that it is deficient in foot-work. But the criticism is based on a double ignorance—of the place of 'foot-work' in Indian dancing, and of Tagore's conception of dancing. 'Foot-work' is prominent only in the Kathak style; it is controlled in the Bharata Natya school, in the Kathakali and in most folk-dances. Foot-work is very often a repetition of the '*bols*' of the *tabla*, and by itself conveys no meaning of the theme. It is more a display of virtuosity than a communication of the spirit, which is better achieved by the eyes, the brows, the neck, the trunk, the hands and the *mudras*. Tagore's conception was rhythm, and *not* the mechanical division and subdivision, permutation and combination of beats or *matras*. The *laya*, the larger rhythm that encompasses the beats, had to be observed, and it was generally observed. Besides, the body beautiful must not be exhibited, but only the idea and the sentiment. Such a spirit is basically Indian, but it is not purely traditional. In the Shastras, the human body has to conform to the angelic form.[38] In place of the

angels Tagore gave his angelic songs to conform to. Therefore, the criticism on the score of foot-work is unsound. It only betrays a prejudice for the sensual and the mechanical. What may be urged instead is the comparative hesitancy in exploiting other limbs, e.g. eyes and neck. Fingers are skilfully used, but the too frequent swings of the arms spoil their effect. Occasionally, one detects looseness in the main structure. The idea is that the theme should hold it firm. But when the theme is subtle and complicated, it is a tall order for the performers. A little more of simplicity could assure the homogeneity of the pattern. Now that new Tagore dramas will not be available, one wonders what will happen to the talented performers that Shanti-Niketan has produced. But many years will pass before the Shanti-Niketan repertoire is exhausted. Shanti-Niketan's contribution to song-dances is permanent.

Uday Shankar's Culture Centre in Almora, U.P., now dissolved, was the second radiating centre, while Vallathol's Kala Bhavan is the third. The Almora school was cosmopolitan, while the Kala Bhavan is mainly Indian. Both, however, have worked to stress the South Indian element in the sense that the Kathakali, which is one of Uday Shankar's bases, is also that of Vallathol's brilliant revivals and experiments. Both consider that the Hindu dance, which is to be found in the South in some purity, is more worthy of attention than the degraded Bai-nautch of the North. Uday Shankar, however, is not above lifting a form or two from the Kathak style, but that style is not his strong point. The West has influenced him a great deal, particularly on the production side, while Vallathol is indigenous, with the Vidwan and the drone in the simplest of rural settings to help his forms. Vallathol does not stress the background; but for Uday Shankar, it is essential, musically and pictorially, though it is seldom allowed to dominate. In fact, music is not always woven into

the texture of Uday Shankar's dance-pattern, while it is always done in the Shanti-Niketan school. His orchestra is merely a prelude and a support. This deficiency on the side of music does not touch the effectiveness of the Kerala style.

What music cannot provide, sculpture does. Uday Shankar's ally is sculpture, as that of the Kathak is music, and of Shanti-Niketan the united front of songs and pictures. To enjoy Uday Shankar's dance a morning dip into a volume of plates of Indian statuary is helpful. His fingers are poised in the traditional style, the eyes dart and the neck rolls in the approved manner, the body moves from one position to another as the drama dictates, but the pose is the thing in Uday Shankar. He begins with it, pauses in it, and ends with it. He never loses grip over the axis round which the system moves. It is the trunk from which the gestures shoot out like branches, keeping the organic connexion intact. Even when his arms quiver and roll, and what a rolling, the impulse seems to come from an imaginary still, central, prototypical structure of which the body is merely the physical form. The spirit of Indian dance, viz. imitation of the divine image, is in every pose of Uday Shankar. The image is sometimes almost physically divine, as we know it through stones and bronze, but it is certainly none all-too-human, which is his strength and his Indianness. But for the alliance with sculpture, the *sattvik* quality of dynamic equilibrium in Uday's performances would not have been possible.

Uday Shankar's last ballets marked a progress in his idea of dance. He was no longer content with mere mythology, and he proposed to reach out to the problems of the day. Only two ballets were shown, the Rhythm of Life, and the Machine. As ideas, both were weak, almost sentimental. As achievements, the parts did not hang together. But the individual and the group-performances were excellent. His Shadow Play

had, however, a high conception and a just technique. He was coming nearer to the life of the people. But will he be allowed to arrive? He had come down from mythology to allegory, will he step down further to create symbols? Let him have his divine forms, but the gods also change shapes while retaining their godhead.

India is full of folk-dances. Strictly speaking, the Manipuri, the Vaishnava, the Chow or the Koota are *not* folk-dances. They are highly stylized ones, with elaborate rules and intricate rhythms. The *tal* in the kirtan and the Manipuri styles is a variation of the *pancham-sowari,* which is often the despair of accomplished players in the cities. But the *Gajan* (Bengal), *Kajri* (U.P. and Bihar), *Ahir* (U.P.), and the *Lathi* dances are folk-dances. It is not generally known that martial dances with sticks, swords and strings are popular throughout India. Their common features are group-formation, participation of all present in the dance, i.e., the absence of division between the performer and the spectator, the rotation of the central role among the participants, vigorous movements, circular and forward and backward, lively music with simple beats, and festive nature. Nearly all primitive tribes are dance-mad. It is not difficult to trace the Bharatiya *mudra* of a peacock, an elephant, a horse, or a deer or a lion to the unsophisticated mimetic gestures of Indian aborigines.

The future of the dance-movement depends upon these folk styles. G. S. Datta had popularized one—the Rai-Benshe. Haren Ghosh, who has done for this movement as much as anybody else in India, has popularised the Manipuri and the Chow-Seraikhela, in particular. There is hardly any school that he has not sponsored, and his chief merit lies in his bringing these folk-dances out of their retirement and making India dance-conscious.*

*Haren Ghosh has been a victim of the recent communal fury in Calcutta. It is a tragic loss to Indian dance.

The present status of dancing is similar to that of Indian Music and Painting thirty years ago. The incubus of mythology is there, and social obloquy is beginning to disappear. The appeal is yet confined to the middle classes who will still have ogling women to entertain them than merciful divinities to bless them. Production is gaining in importance. Indian dancing is still dependent for its growth and execution upon individuals. If it is also weak and thin, it is a further proof of the fact that 'infiltration' can seldom strike the deeper veins of society.

The Bengal Famine, however, has been responsible for a new spurt. As in painting and music, so in dancing the touch with the supreme social reality of India, viz. death and sub-human living, has done what theory could not. Through the People's Theatre Movement, a genuine impetus has been given to dancing (as also to music). Some of the forms are derivative, but there is no denying the general direction to approximate to the rhythms of common, collective, actual living as in fields and factories. At the same time, one would have wished that the brilliant young performers understood the social function of rituals and their intimate connexion with dance-forms.

CHAPTER VIII

THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM

The preceding chapters do not pretend to be a comprehensive account of Modern Indian Culture. Among many other items, literary and aesthetic criticism was precluded from the treatment of arts and letters. Only a sociological survey of the present position was the objective. The past came in for its pull on behalf of the continuity or the discontinuity of its context. In the pursuit of that objective an important strand in the web of social causation came out, viz. the birth, growth and decline of an artificial elite-group within these one hundred and fifty years. Its particular culture is usually identified with Indian culture. But, certainly, the *bidagdha-jana*, the *nagarak*, the courtier or the *grihaśtha* of other days is a genus distinct from the *bhadralok* of today. While the former had a measure of peace, style and balance in his attitudes and conduct, the latter is driven by discontent and staggered. That peace was not of the graveyard just as the present discontent is not divine. The middle-class soul, which is alleged to be the originator and the repository of culture, is stricken by a malady. It is simultaneously preyed upon by a new sense of guilt and a feeling of denial. It knows that it does not belong to India, and must cover its shame in the loudness of the arriviste's assertion or by a cloying complacency. The middle class has also apprehended the closing of its career, and must find the enemy. One section of it has found the enemy inside and turned to reform and rationalism, giving up many a value in the process; another has sought the enemy outside, became anti-British, and anti-Muslim or anti-Hindu by communal conviction, sacri-

ficing the priceless heritage of social adaptation. The latest enemy of the 'middle class' is Communism, Moscow and the Soviet; and the enmity is being sedulously fostered by all the agencies that know how to play upon guilt, fear, and frustration. Unfortunately, few have realized the nature of the malady in terms of the social forces that had been released by the juncture of new situations like the destruction of indigenous merchant-capital and the rural pattern, the novel land-settlement, and the socially useless policy of education by 'infiltration' initiated by the British in India. It is not easy for anybody belonging to a free country to know how that Great Denial has worked havoc with the various attempts at renaissance. Freedom of opinion India has, no doubt, enjoyed in some measure in the British period; but it has been a freedom to quote authors who were writing under the pressure of their own culture and deducing eternal laws from it. Science has come to India, but the science-graduate seldom displays the critical temper in regard to life outside the laboratory. The so-called scientific attitude of our historians and economists is at best naively mechanistic. We also know of the politician who is radical only in politics. Such a result is not illustrative of a full renaissance. In short, India could not fully utilize whatever opportunities she got, because they cut across her traditions, and because the methods of their imposition spoilt the substance of her need for new life. A much deeper layer of consciousness than the memory for purple patches is involved in the burgeoning of a people's spirit; a broader vision than what the dreaming spires of Oxford inspire or a seat in the Delhi Secretariat provides is required for seizing the requisites for rejuvenating Indian culture.

A couple of Nobel Laureates, a dozen Fellows of the Royal Society, and a few more Knights from the academic circle are not sufficient. In fact, they do not

make up Indian culture. India has forty crores of people, her civilization is at least three thousand years old, and her culture cannot be exhausted by producing out of the middle class only a hundred remarkable men and women in a hundred years. In a sense, India's great men of the recent past have diffused the burden on Indian Culture, they have not lifted the deadweight.

For obvious reasons, the frustration in politics has not been discussed in this volume. Its importance in the field of culture is great. The politics and the culture of a subject country cannot be separated from each other. But more competent men will certainly describe India's political disillusionment. But one relevant point has to be made. The political frustration is shifting towards hatred—a poisonous constituent of culture anywhere, more so of Indian culture as it was and likely to be in the near future. How the British will react to it is not difficult to guess. Anti-British feeling can easily be canalised into communal bitterness. In the economic sphere, the opinion may be hazarded that no amount of fillip given by the War to Indian capital, if it be at all there, can make up for the heightened feeling of disappointment at the failure of Indian commerce-capital to be fully converted into industrial capital or reduce the resentment at the inability of the partially industrialized capital to take the next step forward in the production of heavier goods. Culturally, this new phenomenon is more dangerous than the earlier one, because its emotional reactions are greater and wider now than before. Economically, however, these unpleasant reactions can be countered by Indo-British deals and agreements. Similarly with labour. More men and women than before have been engaged in industries, and their wages have also increased; but the phenomenal rise in prices of foodstuffs and other essential commodities used by the labourers and their dependants has eaten up the increase in their income, and their

class-consciousness will definitely be on the increase. The condition of certain sections of agricultural producers, if anything, is worse. True that strikes declined in number in the War years, but this peace was secured by ordinances. Industrial unrest is always covered in the period of greater employment and rising wages. But underneath flows the dark current of dissatisfaction. It does not take a prophet to predict that when it comes up on the surface, it will extinguish many a wishful thought of happy collaboration between capital and labour. Industrial labourers are not likely to forget that during the War some of their representative organizations were not recognized, and that they got allowances and bonuses, and inadequate ones at that, instead of a rise in the scale of wages. Logically, they cannot long defer the understanding that in spite of their temporary prosperity their share in the increased national income was less than that of their employers. But then the Indian capitalists will not find it difficult to prove that their dividends were taken away by the Excess Profits Tax. Memories of the confusion in prices and scarcity in food will be only too handy to act as effective resonators of the resentment. The lower 'middle classes', who have been hit the hardest, will also contribute their quota. Unemployment will also stalk the factories and offices. And then, capital and labour will be friends with the upper hundreds against the common foe, bound by non-economic ties of hatred. Those who naively believe in the advent of a new order for India through the intervention of Soviet Russia, and those who hope for a sensible scheme for post-War reconstruction sponsored by the ruling classes of either Great Britain or India for the Indian people are co-tenants of a particular paradise. Therefore, for some time to come, the sense of Historical Denial, which has been at the back of modern Indian culture so long, is going to become a Living Presence and dictate all fresh cultural

efforts. Which means that India, free or otherwise, has to reckon with the cruder potentialities of Capitalism, Nationalism and Communalism at no distant date. If on top of it, the Atlantic civilization goes in for 'technocracy' or 'managerial democracy', as it is very likely to do, then the conditions-precedent to Fascism in India will be considerably strengthened by pressure, by imitation or in reaction, or by all combined.

In a way, the above prospect should not frighten any Indian who has faith in his country's history. This land has passed through many vicissitudes and rationalized them into devious schools of pessimism. If a prophet who was a cross between an Indian anchorite in a cave and the Preacher of the Ecclesiastes were the only possibility; or if the historian of Indian culture could say today like Prospero: "Our revels now are ended: these our actors, As I foretold you, were all spirits, and Are melted into air, into thin air; And, like the baseless fabric of this vision, The cloud clapp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn temples, the great globe itself, Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, Leave not a rack behind;" or if again, the eyes of so many young men and women had no speculation, then India would have turned on her side and slept for another century the sleep of the vexed. In India, time has been reckoned by the visits of the spirit and the appearance of Avatars, as it is counted by the primitives in terms of the visitations of Nature and the rhythm of seasons. So, one might argue that India could still possess her soul in patience. But whose soul? Hatred lurks in the purlieus of the soul of the average Indian, who is ready to inject the poison brewed by the long-drawn alchemy of denial into every activity. This will not give India any peace, because it is contrary to her spirit.

India, in the three millenniums of her civilization has never produced hymns of hate. From the Prithvi-

sukta in the Atharva Veda to the Bande Mataram of Bankim Chandra, Indians have offered paeans of praise to the Mother Earth. The *Hindustan Hamara* of Iqbal and the *Jana gana mana* of Tagore conjure visions of humanity. True that in this spaciousness India was not oblivious of her own place. But she never strove for its expansion. Subsequently, however, it began to be felt that this continent was like a microcosm which had been set the task of creating a unity out of diverse peoples and creeds and the varying tempos of their culture. This unity, on further analysis, was found to be antithetical to the totalitarian type. One could call it plural or organic according to taste, but its essence was at once concrete in its emphasis on conduct and universal in its intimate connexion with the Divine. Above all, its expression was a goodish measure of toleration: goodish, but not the full measure in view of the age-long contempt towards the outcaste and the Yavana. At the same time, this intolerance seldom created the stresses which had destroyed other societies of repute. So we see the reasoning of the claim that India has a message for the world in the fact of her survival and unity amidst crumbling cultures.

That sense had also been nurtured by earnest patriots in the first flush of nationalism. But the nature of nationalism soon dictated its nurture. The groundwork of the new national feeling had been a search by the Indian middle class of equality in Government employment. Blessed by the larger policy, the urge for equality was conterminous with Hindu resurgence. When the educated sections of the Hindu community behaved like the wayward bull that came out of the cattle-breeder's eugenic experiments to produce a docile cow which would not kick at the milk-pail, the Muslim interests which had been suppressed or ignored by the British since the beginning of the nineteenth century had to be attended to and carefully nursed by the same British.

The number of applicants was growing in the meantime. New avenues of employment were also not within the range of possibility. These faggots were collected to form the *fascio* of the Indian nationalism; only the axe and the fire were wanting. Mazzini and Garibaldi were on every leader's lips; though the intellectual allegiance was to Cavour. The heart, however, cried for Bismarck's type of nationalism. Bengal and Maharashtra produced the fire by the bomb. This mixture of anarchist philosophy and action with patriotic sentiments was the feature of Indian nationalism in the first decade of this century. If the anarchist programme of action has been dropped, the anarchist philosophy has remained to sabotage all thinking on collectivist or socialist lines. The patriotism of a spurious middle class among a subject people could not very well go any further. Then Tagore came. He found that Mother India, like the Wild Ass' Skin in Balzac's great fable, was shrinking at every fulfilment of material wish. Tagore re-asserted the international outlook of Indian Culture, re-formulated India's message and reiterated her demand of independence. The utter need of self-help and co-operation in the re-vitalization of Indian villages was stated with his usual fervour. For the time, terrorism lost its appeal with the middle-class intellectual. But Tagore's apotheosis of the individual looked like an extension of the earlier anarchism. Those who were influenced by him never realized that his individualism was rooted in the personalism of the Upanishads. The vast indifference of the Indian intellectual to the abiding traditions of India was a big vacuum which no love of Western thought or of parliamentary life could fill. Gandhi's unerring instinct noticed the danger, as also the way of combating it. He propounded that 'ahimsa' was the quintessence of Indian culture. If historical judgement went against his theory, his own impeccable life supported it.

One is not sure how far his philosophy of non-

violence has gone deep into the mind of the Indian people, but one cannot doubt the high moral quality of the function of that philosophy in striking for the deepest base of Indian culture, viz. the traditions of social adaptation. Gandhi stands for the permanent values of civilization, just as Tagore, and all the Indian sages before him have always done. In those common values, the 'person' in indissoluble connexion with the Divine has been the fixed centre. With Jawaharlal, the divine connexion has been substituted by the social. His society is that of the world collectively marching towards better living. Here too, naturally, there is no trace of hatred. In fact, he is not sufficiently anti-British or anti-Muslim for the common taste. To repeat: India has never hated or excluded in the long course of her history, and yet, she is learning today to hate and exclude. This is against the teachings of all the Indian sages we know of, ancient and modern, Hindu or Muslim, though this may be natural in the pattern of India's all-round disillusionment and frustration, in the context of her emotionalism, and in the foreground of modern Indian culture.

What has been stated above in regard to the spirit of Indian culture is correct history. But the correctness is of history as the record of a storehouse. A close dependence upon such a concept is an evidence of laziness and naive faith in the spontaneity of social forces, another version of transcendentalism. Its capacity for generating amiable emotions is indubitable; but its ability to comprehend fresh realities and prompt young men and women to high creative endeavour can be disputed. It is so safe that it does not countenance departures, adventurous living and dangerous thought. There is, however, an idea of history as 'making'. That posits a deliberate fostering of selected social processes by collective efforts for collective ends. In this, many risks and uncertainties are involved. But they have to be

taken in the very interests of living itself. Similarly, if the present natural hatred leads to blind alleys, there will have to be another view of naturalness. Nature is not merely the given; it is also the potential. And the potentialities of Indian history have to be brought out. That too involves collective ends and means. History as record and Nature as the given, form a conspiratorial pair. History as making and Nature as potentiality fall into revolutionary comradeship when directed by social consciousness. In the making of History, there is no place for hatred. The world knows too well how international hatred has been found handy and even deliberately whipped up by reactionaries to scotch potential revolutionary trends at home. India may not, in her present mood, see through that dirty trick. But see she must, and the sooner the better. Otherwise, the passion for freedom which is the positive charge of the hatred will be wasted in the bitterest of communal conflicts. And to endow new meaning and purpose to her culture India enjoys the singular good fortune of drawing lessons from certain progressive tendencies of the world today. India can very well look up to the Soviet experiment in this regard.

So the immediate problem of Indian culture is how to transform the hatred, and put it on the high road that opens out to new vistas. The humble solution is: Comprehend the spirit of Indian traditions and orient that spirit in the light of the collective life of the people. It can be done. But it will never be done by amiable talk of the East and the West or the Hindus and the Muslims swooning into each other's arms in mystic affinity or soulful ebullience. Nor will it be achieved by praising the virtues of the British Commonwealth of Nations and pointing out the profit in India's deciding to remain in it. Much can be effected by the new creative spurt that is likely to come soon. But it is only a possibility. India has so long been at the mercy of outside forces, trans-

cendental once, world-political now. It is time that she should set about creating new capital out of her own energy of which she still has an ample store. A store, however, is not a hoarding place, and energy is not a jewel from the cellar. India's energy is in her social dynamics. In these hundred years or so, a counterfeit class has been uttered. It once performed certain functions. Now it has none. Its mobility has increased, but it has not burst its bonds. Its social distance from the masses is wide, and getting wider with every creation of new interests intended to act as sops to frustration. It may still increase in the next few years, for aught one knows. So the middle class will have to realize, here and now, that its old role in history is over, and that its new role is with others whom it has so long unwillingly ignored. Only then will India profit by what has happened to her in these war years. Otherwise, Indian Culture will come to naught and be swamped by the resurgent tide of Fascism. The symptoms and the conditions are there. Indian Culture has to be 're-made', that is the be-all and end-all of the question.

To draw up a horoscope of Indian Culture is not a gainful occupation. The British Sun is setting over India; and with it, so at least the Indians feel, the West's influence will decline. If and when the British quit, and some time after, the Indian sky will be clouded and reeking with the smoke of communal arson. A forecast is thus ruled out. Besides, culture cannot be 'made' except from scratch. Although it is a product of human artifice, it takes time to grow. The days of the elite or the dictator conjuring up culture by fiats and ukases also seem to be over. So only the capital conditions of the 're-making' of Indian Culture can be stated here. The first relates to the inner and the last to the out-going attitudes. Other conditions are either subsidiary to them or aids to their fulfilment.

Along with the withdrawal of foreign rule, India,

the whole of it or each part of it, must needs 'withdraw' into its self. Every civilization in history has thus 'retired' to draw from its inner resources and come out to meet a new 'challenge' with fresh strength, to use Toynbee's expressions. It is not a reactionary move provided that the 'rally' is effected. India had done likewise in her 'times of trouble'; only such accessions of strength were initiated by individuals for their private purposes, and the benefit to society was indirect. We hold that mystics can no longer be revolutionary in an open society, which India is going to be with some vengeance. Therefore, conscious emphasis will have to be laid on the 'return and the rally'; because the 'withdrawal' being into the collective unconscious, cannot but be unconscious. Conscious adjustment to Indian traditions and symbols is thus the first condition of re-making. This holds true of Pakistan too. While its Islamic Symbols may get a new life, their Indian impurities may help the Indian tradition.

The outgoing attitude will have to be one of hearty alliance with all the people's Governments, be they of the East or of the West, the North or the South. Wherever the people are on the move, wherever they have triumphed over their political, economical, or social matters, the so-called repositories and makers of culture, there the interests of Indian Culture will lie. The culture of static parts is of the museum. It is not suggested that the West has ceased to exist—it will at least live through the U.S.A., but certainly the world provides other types which the West has taught us all to ignore or look on with contempt. Western Culture, as we have known it these years, has been essentially a class-culture; and the large number who have adopted it have been conditioned to believe that the nature of culture itself is such. But many people today have begun to think otherwise. They are our friends, and their friendship will help us to rally. India possesses an

advantage in this regard. Here, the common man is still a person, a whole, more integrated and more humanly cultivated than the English-educated, westernized individual of his countryman. He has still a form, a structure, a style. In the West, the position is otherwise. There, the common man has been reduced to being an attendant of the machine and his humanity has been split and endangered. He has been debarred from culture and fed on its cheap substitutes. So, in future, Indians can only meet those who are wresting their human claims from unwilling hands and remaking their own cultures in the process.

Between that initial subjective and this final objective condition others find their place. Balkanization of India, communal strife, etc. are transitional realities. For one, the traditions of synthesis are still strong and valuable; and even Pakistan and Hindustan will have minorities which are more than census-minorities. Indian states will remain Indian in outlook in any case. The unassimilated portions left out of the synthesis will no doubt create difficulties: they will drift in search of autonomy; they may seek alliance with other culture types; yet India's pull is likely to weigh in the long run. The immediate danger is civil hatred, civil because the political hatred of Brutus is certainly to be thus canalized. Its form is likely to be Hindu or Muslim revivalism. But it can be met by a material programme in which the interests of the people, neither of the Hindus nor of the Muslim as such, coincide. In that creative pursuit lies the hope of remaking of Indian Culture, thus also of the re-union of India's parts. Unity, of the type created by British administration, cannot, and should not survive. But union may, and should, come.

REFERENCES

CHAPTER I

N.B. *An Advanced History of India* by Majumdar, Raichaudhuri & Datta must be consulted for facts of Indian History; and Pandit Nehru's *Discovery of India* for a balanced interpretation thereof by a cultured mind possessed of a sense of history.

1. e.g., K. M. Munshi—*Akhand Hindusthan.*
2. Moreland—*India at the death of Akbar.*
3. H. Bergson—*The Two Sources of Morality and Religion.*
4. P. Sorokin—*Social and Cultural Dynamics, Vol. I.*
5. Ibid.
6. Radhakrishnan and H. Datta stop at the Hindu; Mrs R. Davids, among others, stops at the Hindu-Buddhist, but Dr Qanungo's *Life of Dara Shikoh,* Dr Tarachand's *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture,* and Kshiti M. Shastri's *Dadu* and *Kabir* include the Muslim contribution. Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India,* Ch. VI, contains probably the most balanced account of the synthesis.
7. Cf. the position of the Church in Catholic Europe; L. Sturzo—*Politics and Morality: Church and the State.*
8. Roger Bastide—*The Mystical Life.* Mukerjee—*Theory and Art of Mysticism.*
9. Hu Shih—*The Chinese Renaissance.*
10. Mr Churchill too has had his visions, in his adult days in South Africa. They related to himself. Since then, they have been about the British Empire. But none are of the religious type, unless it is held that the Empire is a sort of Secular Church and he a cardinal thereof. Recent visions are about Anglo-American civilisation, known as Western Democracy.
11. Neitzsche and Bismarck, both thought that if they had the power they would make the Indians read Sanskrit only and keep them religious. They condemned the British for teaching them English and Science.

12. Sister Nivedita, to name one only, in her *Web of Indian Life.*

13. Shree Aurobindo is excluded, *vide* his letter to Sir S. Cripps.

14. Footnote to Marx's *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* in which Greek myth is referred; Marx's letter to Engels, 2nd June, 1853. Engels to C. Schmidt, Oct. 27, 1890. Letters to Starkenburg and Bloch, pp. 517 and 475-477 *Selected Correspondence.*

15. Vatsyayan's *Kama Sutra.*

16. P. C. Roy—*History of Hindu Chemistry; Introduction*—B. N. Seal.

17. Ronaldshay—*The Heart of Aryavarta.*

18. Tagore's series of lectures known as *Santi-niketan.*

19. B. N. Datta—*The Origin and Development of the Indian Social Process,* series of articles in the *Parichay*—. Calcutta. *Vide* also his *Studies in Indian Social Polity* (in English).

20. *"Uttishthata Jagrata" "Charaiveti".*

21. Cf. Blunt=*The Caste System in Northern India;* Ghurye, Ketkar, O'Malley and N. Dattas' works on the same. The latest on the Caste System is Hutton's *Caste in India.* Dr. Kapadia's *Hindu Kinship* is a major work, just out.

22. A. S. Altekar on the *Contributions of Buddhism to Hindu Culture* quoted in the *Social Welfare,* June 4, 1942. Jawaharlal's *Discovery of India* pp. 194-199.

23. B. K. Sarkar—*Gambhira.*

24. Spengler—*The Decline of the West,* Vol. I, p. 352.

25. Vallie Poussin—*Buddhism,* in the *Legacy of India.*

26. *Chinese Renaissance,* pp. 85 ff.

27. R. C. Majumdar—*Corporate Life in Ancient India.*

28. R. K. Mookerji—*Hindu Civilisation.*

29. Poussin—Ibid.

30. H. C. Roy Chowdhury—*Early History of the Vaishnava Sect.*

31. Poussin—Ibid.

32. B. K. Sarkar—*Gambhira.*

33. Maulana Ziauddin of the Vishwabharati—*The Development of Cultural Relations between Hindus and Muslims. Cal. Rev.*, April and May, 1935. Maulana's researches in this field are very valuable.

34. M. L. Chowdhury's lecture at the Calcutta Muslim Institute on *The Influence of Islam on Indian Culture.* Dr Tara Chand's brilliant treatise with the same title is one-sided.

35. Every article, lecture, and treatise of Kshiti Mohan Shastri (Vishwabharati) is indispensable for this period. I am deeply indebted to him. The late Dr Bartawal's *Nirguna School of Hindi Poetry,* is a scholarly work.

36. *Chaitanya Charitamrit.* Biman Mazoomdar's researches into Chaitanya literature are very valuable.

37. B. N. Datta—*Origin and Development*—Ibid: *Studies in Indian Social Polity.*

38. Ishwari Prasad's *Medieval India.*

39. Shelvankar gives a different interpretation in his brilliant, banned book, *The Problem of India.*

40. V. N. Bhatkhandeji's papers on *Hindustani Music* in the XVI, XVII and XVIII centuries. P. B. Joshi's in the Allahabad University Journal, O. C. Ganguly's *Ragas and Raginis,* and articles in *The Sangeet* (Lucknow).

41. *Ain-i-Akbari.*

42. Pundarik Vithal.

43. R. C. Shukla—*Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas;* K. M. Munshi—*Gujrat and its Literature;* D. C. Sen—*History of Bengali Language and Literature.*

44. A. K. Coomarswamy—*History of Indian and Indonesian Art.*

45. N. C. Mehta—*Studies in Indian Painting.*

46. O. C. Ganguly—*Ragas and Raginis.*

47. E. B. Havell—*Ancient and Medieval Architecture of India;* O. C. Ganguly=*Indian Architecture;* G. D. Sirkar—*Mandirer Katha* (in Bengali); Percy Brown's *Indian Architecture* (Vols. I & II). See also Dr. Stella Kramrisch's monumental study of Indian Temples and Dr. A. K. C's wise essay

on the same in review thereof, reprinted in the *Shilpi*, (Madras), for the Hindu conception.

48. Articles by various authors in the *Modern Review* and the *Rupam*.

49. Bernier's *Travels*.

50. Tagore—*'Kalantar'* or the Crisis of the Age, the most brilliant interpretation of Indian history written so far.

51. *Marx and Engels on India* (Socialist Book Club, Allahabad).

52. Amal Home—*Rajah Ram Mohan Roy* (Centenary Celebrations).

53. Shib Nath Shastri's *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, Bepin Chandra Pal's articles.

CHAPTER II

1. Abdul Odud in his lectures on the Hindu-Muslim question at the Viswa-Bharati gives a number of instances. Tipu Sultan's mass-conversions (Wilks' History) are, however, to be counterbalanced by his gifts to the Sringeri Math.

2. I have followed Giddings' *The Principles of Sociology* from now on. His later work, e.g., *Historical and Descriptive Sociology* showed an advance on his earlier views. I have taken them together.

3. Giddings does not use it, but he means it.

4. Blunt—*Caste System in N. India*. S. S. Nehru—*Caste and Credit*. Brahmins cannot use ploughs and do not grow certain fruits. Briggs—*Chamars* shows the rigour of their internal prohibitions.

5. Muslims for weaving.

6. Probably, the undifferentiated agricultural economy.

7. R. K. Mukerjee's *Comparative Economics*, Vol. II.

8. Mathai—*Village Government in British India*.

9. Chinese nepotism and graft have been traced to a keen sense of family by competent observers like Smith and Snow.

10. Small and E. A. Ross use it.

11. Anjaria in *Political Obligation in the Hindu State* holds a slightly different view. The only classic instance is of Ram Das and Shivaji; but one swallow does not make summer.

12. Gait's *Census Report,* India, 1911 and Blunt, (U.P.) 1911, where the dynamics of the caste system have been illustrated. Hutton's *Census Report,* India, 1931 and his *Caste in India* are anthropological and eclectic in their approach.

13. The writer's *Views and Counter-views,* chapter on *Dictatorship.*

14. The writer leaves Giddings here.

15. *Mussalman Culture*=Calcutta University. Bartold is not Red, otherwise, Professor Suhrawardy, the translator, would not have touched him.

16. *Critique of Political Economy.*

17. Marxists would call it variation from the mean.

18. Coomarswamy does not fail to note the differences in the handling of Razm-nama and Rasikapriya. *(History of Indian and Indonesian Art.)* N. C. Mehta stresses the combined efforts in painting.

19. Darbari Kanada and Mian-ki-Todi, among the heavy, Sarfarda, Zila, among the lighter, to name four only. Mr Karnada, however, believed that the Darbari was only the Sudha-Kanada of old. Madrasi pandits identify the Mian-ki-Todi with a Shastric *raga.* Sitar and Tabla are known to be Amir Khusroe's inventions.

20. I have drawn extensively, among others, from the following books:—(1) Iqbal—*Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (the 5th chapter, The spirit of Muslim Culture, is masterly). (2) H. Lammens' *Islam.* (3) V. V. Bartold *Mussalman Culture.* (4) *The Legacy of Islam*—Edited by Arnold. (5) Levi=*Int. to the Sociology of Islam.* 2 Vols., (6) Hitti's *History of the Arabs,* and (7) Hell=*Arabic Civilisation.*

21. Pirpur report. Ceremonial singing of *Bande Mataram* was one of the 'atrocities.' The respective roles of the mother and the father-cults among the Hindus and the Muslims should

be further studied. The father 'should' belong to the pastoral Semitic or Hebraic peoples. Mother-cult is very strong in Bengal where Tantrikism has a firm hold. Mother-cult in India seems to be pre-Aryan.

22. Iqbal—Ibid.

23. Nicholson—*Personality in Sufism.*

24. Qanungo's *Dara Shikoh.*

25. Rajagopalachariar before 1942.

26. Hell—Ibid.

27. Lammens—Ibid.

28. Levi—Ibid, and de Santillana on Islamic law and Society in *The Legacy of Islam.*

29. Cow-sacrifice was prohibited by many Muslim kings, besides Akbar. Even political safeguards were provided e.g., Babar's testament. *Religious policy of the Moghul Emperors*=Sri Ram Sharma, *Calcutta Review,* January 1935.

* As Darling pointed it out in his Presidential Address to the All-India Economic Conference, Lucknow Session, 1927.

30. *The Roots of National Socialism*—Rohan D'Butler.

31. Ayer—*Language, Truth and Logic.*

32. Iqbal—Ibid.

33. Bogardus—*A History of Social Thought;* Enan—*Ibn Khaldoun.*

34. The idea of Hindu time implicit in the doctrine of Karma is not mechanical, philosophically, but, sociologically, it is.

35. Cf. W. Lewis=*Time and the Western Man*; Sorokin's articles on the sociological aspects of time in the *Am. J. of Soc.,* integrated later in *Socio-Cultural Causality, Time and Space.*

36. M. Ginsberg—*Psychology of Society.*

37. V. Pareto—*The Mind and Society* (Four Vols.) Borkenau's *Pareto* in *Modern Sociologists* series is balanced and critical. Aldous Huxley's article is still the best introduction. See T. Parsons' *Structure of Social Action.*

38. Loud, though not yet literary. A fact, alas! at last.

39. Vaihinger—*Philosophy of 'As If'.*

40. Only one statement is clear enough so far.

* For the best sociological analysis of Indian Islamic movement please consult W. C. Smith's *Modern Islam in India.* Mr Yusuf Ali's chapter on *Muslim Culture and Religious Thought* in the volume *Modern India and the West,* edited by L. S. S. O'Malley, deals succinctly with the relevant problems. His *Cultural History of India during the British Period* is a more ambitious account, full of interesting details, but without a theme. Readers, however, will derive benefit from a study of these volumes, the most informative ones available. Dr. Ambedkar's *Pakistan,* and Dr. Rajendra Prasad's *India Divided* are very useful volumes. Strange that the Pakisthan movement did not produce any literature of that quality. Is it because unity demands knowledge and separation does not?

CHAPTER III

1. Shelvankar—*The Problem of India.*

2. U. N. Ghosal, Jayaswal, Samaddar, N. C. Banerjee, and P. N. Banerjee have all made valuable contributions to the subject. Besides using their standard works, I have found Dr Radha Kumud Mookerji's *Hindu Civilisation* invaluable. His latest, *Indian Land System,* published by the Land Revenue Commission of the Bengal Government, is a gem.

3. Commons—*Legal Foundations of Capitalism.* Max Weber—*General Economic History.*

4. Shelvankar—Ibid.

5. B. N. Datta=Ibid. He writes with a slight anti-Brahminical bias.

6. R. K. Mookerji—*Indian Land System,* gives the quotations.

7. No reference to communal ownership as such is in the *Vedas.* Which does not mean that it could not be there. It may as well suggest that it was so universal that only departures from it could be noted. More positive evidences have to come forth before Morgan and Engels' scheme can

be made to fit in with early Indian conditions. We can only recommend Engels' *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (West and Torr's translation) and Morgan's *Ancient Society* to our Indologists.

8. I disagree with Dr Radha Kumud Mookerji in this regard.

9. All Indian historians are patriots, usually passive, so no names.

10. I have followed (*a*) Ishwari Prasad's *Medieval India*, (*b*) Sharma's *Mughal Rule in India* and (*c*) Khosla's *Mughal Kingship*, in particular.

11. Mavor—*An Economic History of Russia*.

12. Cf. The Bar-bhuiyas of Bengal ('Swatantra Bangla', R. R. Chanda, 3rd March, 1942, the *Anand Bazar Patrika*). The story is similar in Oudh. (Ashirbadi Lal—*The First Two Kings of Oudh*).

13. B. N. Datta—Ibid.

14. Known as the Great Rent Case.

15. This view runs counter to the bourgeois-patriotic view of the Mutiny held by Har Dayal and others. But facts speak otherwise. I am glad to find that B. N. Datta agrees with me (*Parichay*).

16. R. K. Mookerji—*Indian Land System*.

17. The memo. of the Bengal Landholders' Association to the Floud Commission is pathetically correct in its contention that the Government by its tenancy legislation had taken away by the left hand what it had given by the right in the way of Permanent Settlement.

18. cf. Gras—*An Introduction to Economic History*. His and Pirenne's account of the relation between town-economy and rural economy is very revealing. M. Dobbs' *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* embodies the latest researches on the subject. No work has been done here on the subject.

19. L. C. Jain's *Indigenous Banking in India* is still the best book on the subject. H. C. Sinha's *Early European Banking in India* deals in a masterly way with Bengal.

20. Parkinson—*Trade in the Eastern Seas* (1793-1813).

21. D. Pant—*The Commercial Policy of the Mughals.* Dr Radha Kamal Mukerjee has tackled a large number of hitherto unknown data in his articles on *The Economic History of India, 1600-1800*, in the *Journal of the U. P. Historical Society,* Vol. XIV, Part II, 1942, since developed into a book.

22. Foster—*The English Factories in India.*

23. Jain—Ibid.

24. Jain—Ibid.

25. *Central Banking Inquiry Report.*

26. Dr Nihar Roy in the *Sahitya Parishat Patrika,* 1942. Calcutta.

27. Dasgupta—*Aspects of Bengali Society.*

28. Ibn Batuta.

29. cf. the relegation of the gold-merchants to a lower status.

30. Moreland—*India at the death of Akbar,* and J. C. Sinha —Ibid.

31. H. C. Sinha—Ibid.

32. See J. C. Sinha's comprehensive account in *Economic Annals of Bengal.* For this period, other authoritative works are (1) K. K. Datta =*Alivardi and His Times* and (2) N. L. Chatterji's *Mir Qasim.*

33. A number of articles in Bengali have appeared on this subject on the basis of my own, of course, without reference.

34. H. C. Sinha—Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

1. In this chapter apart from *Selections from Educational Records* (Govt. of India), (*a*) Howell's *Education in British India* (1872), (*b*) *Report of the Calcutta University Commission,* (*c*) Arthur Mayhew=*The Education of India,* (*d*) F. F. Monk—*Educational Policy in India,* (*e*) B. Majumdar—*History of Political Thought* (from Rammohan to Dayananda, 1821-24), Vol. I, Bengal, (f) Sayed Mahmood's *History of English Education in India,* and (*g*) Rajah Ram Mohan Roy's

English Works have been most useful. (*h*) Brajen Banerji's *Sambad Patre Sekater Katha* is every scholar's quarry. (*i*) P. C. Sinha—*The Problems of Education in Bengal* is a handy volume. But the two authors to whom I am particularly indebted are Professor Anath N. Bose, whose articles on *Hundred Years of Western Education in India (Calcutta Review*, 1923) are the blue-print of the early part of this chapter, and Prof. Majumdar, who has collected most useful information on the political aspects of this period.

N.B. Two valuable books have been recently published: B. K. Boman-Behram—*Educational Controversies in India*, and A. N. Basu—*University Education in India*, a continuation of Prof. Basu's researches.

2. Amal Home—*Rajah Ram Mohan Roy* (Centenary Celebrations).

3. What follows is not suggested by Prof. Bose.

4. Here none of the biographers of the Rajah will probably agree; some admirers will violently differ. But it cannot be helped.

5. R. P. Masani—*Dadabhai Naoroji.*

6. The house of a Bengali Civilian writer, posted in Bombay, was once searched by the Police for alleged connection with terrorist activities. From R. C. Dutt to the Civilians of 1941 this literary stream has flowed. In one issue of a Bengali monthly as many as four Civilians' article, poem, story, and one instalment of a novel were published. In Bengal, seven young Civilians have published at least one book, one of whom a dozen, and another three, in their language. Madras knows of two Civilian authors in English. Indian Civilians in the U.P. are all literate; many are cultured; but none are literary.

7. Not even B. Majumdar and B. Banerji, the two best modern scholars on the period, whom I have followed closely for facts from now on. The former's emphasis is on politics, the latter's on the arrangement of reports.

* Sir S. Ahmad and his group of theologians also sought to prove that friendly relations with the British were Islamic.

8. His autobiography.

9. B. Majumdar—Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. *Samyabad.*

12. Old files of the *Patrika* and *Memoirs of Sisir Ghose* (edited by P. Dutt). Also, *Speeches and Writings of Babu Moti Lal Ghose*—edited by Satya Gopal Datta and bros.

13. *Samachar Darpan,* March 17, 1832.

14. This and the following facts are to be found in B. Majumdar—Ibid.

15. *History of English Education in India.*

16. Thus far B. Majumdar.

17. Mayhew's term.

18. Various articles have appeared on Tagore's educational reforms and ideas, of which K. R. Kripalani's *On the Poet as Educationist* is the best; *Vishwabharati Quarterly,* Birthday Number—1941.

19. So people felt, not quite truly, though. The Abode of Peace has given a number of students to the national cause, and one Congress Minister to Madras.

20. The regard of Mahatmaji for Tagore has saved Shantiniketan, but has not succeeded in removing the general suspicion about Shantiniketan's non-national (because *international*) motives. Mahadev Desai's report of Gandhiji's replies to queries in connexion with the Andrews' memorial is interesting.

21. Undertaken by Prof. J. C. Sinha.

22. Consult Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, the eminent philologist, in registered cover. His researches cannot be published.

23. Census Report, 1931, Bengal; though the heading of the schedule is not the same as of previous ones.

24. The Deoband School leads. Its Principal was duly arrested under the Defence of India Rules, during the War.

25. I make no apology for referring largely to Bengal. That is the home of the Babu, the *bhadralok,* and the unemployed B.A. The U.P. is not mentioned because of my personal knowledge over twentyfive years.

CHAPTER V

1. Bepin Chandra Pal—*Bengal Vaishnavism*: D. C. Sen—*Vaishnava Literature of Medieval Bengal*: S. K. De—*Theology and Philosophy of Bengal Vaishnavism* in *Indian Culture*, Oct. 1935. His *Vaishnava Faith and Movement* is the best English treatise written so far.

2. Mansa and Chandi.

3. Chand-Sadagar, for example.

4. R. N. Ghosh in the *Anand Bazar Patrika*.

5. Mymensing—*Giti-kavya*.

6. Syam Sundar Das' and Ram Chandra Shukla's volumes on the history of Hindi language and literature.

7. O. C. Ganguly—*Love Poems in Hindi*.

8. V. S. Khandekar's *Doan Dhruva* for Konkan, and Manik Banerji's *Boatman of the Padma* for the deltaic Bengal.

9. Van Wyck Brooks—*The Flowering of New England*.

10. Emperor Bahadur Shah's poems, kindly translated for me by Mr Ahmad Ali.

11. I. N. Madan—*Modern Hindi Literature*.

12. Apte dealt with the same subject in *Usha Kal*, cf. R. C. Dutt's *Jiban-Prabhat*.

13. Khadilkar—*Keechak-vadh*, but the Government saw through it and stopped its performance.

14. Certain passages in Jayadeva also are obscene.

15. The Jati-Vaishnavas are supposed to have no morality, because of the ease in the selection of partners and divorce.

16. 'Good enough for the poor shopkeeper', as a Brahmin said.

17. The two sects were more or less on par with the two classes.

18. When it is not just juvenile delinquency. The Freudian rebels of the Kallol group have become respectable with age.

19. Those who knew his spiritual life would at once agree, Kshitimohan Sen and Mrs. P. C. Mahalanobis, for example. Also S. K. Maitra in the *Vishwabharati* (80th) Birthday number, and Prof. S. N. Das Gupta in his studies of Tagore.

20. Herford—*Age of Wordsworth.*

21. Sachin Sen has clearly pointed it out in his study of Tagore (in Bengali). May consult the author's *Tagore: A Study,* for general reading.

22. Nihar Ranjan Roy—*Introduction to Rabindra Literature* (Bengali).

23. Amar Roy's *Rabiana* and pages of C. R. Das' (Deshbandhu) *Narayan.*

24. *Nationalism,* 1917. (Lectures in Japan and the U.S.A.).

25. *Viswabharati,* May 1939.

26. *Diary of Travel to Japan,* 1919, *vide* also his violent denunciation of Nationalism (lectures in Japan and the U.S.A.) of 1917.

27. His letter to Yone Noguchi.

28. B. N. Ganguli on Tagore's conception of property in the *Parichay.*

29. *The Message of the Forest*—a lecture.

30. *Creative Unity.*

31. *Swadeshi Samaj.*

* Sumitranandan Pant is alleged to have got rid of his influence, probably because of the fact that once it was more than an influence. His later poems have considerably gained thereby. Surya Kanta Tripathi (Nirala), on the other hand found release in Tagore, and is certainly a radical force in Hindi literature. He is not ashamed of Tagore's influence. In a meeting of the U.P. Progressive writers two only protested against Tagore being called a progressive. If by progress is meant Marxism and *only* Marxism, Tagore was not progressive. His extraordinary sensibility and deep humanism made him understand the *ideals* and the *general* point of view of Marxist writers. But he was not a radical through dialectic or historical or economic materialism. A brilliant estimate is that of Amit Sen in the *Parichay* (Tagore Memorial number).

32. Even Faiz (Lahore) and Ali Sardar Jafri (Lucknow) have to explain their Persian allusions to the average citizen of Lucknow. Which does not mean that the progressive Urdu poets are obscure; *vide* Kaifi. It only suggests that they

want to express new ideas which Urdu does not bear, but which only English, with its rich vocabulary, and Arabic and Persian, with their greater variety of abstract nouns and concrete image-raising adjectives, can with satisfaction. English they are not afraid of using, but they would much rather be allusive in Persian in the interest of their ideas, though at the cost of reduced evocative values. This canalized effort is not communalism, but it is revolutionary, inasmuch as digging up the roots involves contact with the soil and its aeration, lopping off the dead branches and the pruning of the new. A similar process is to be noted in the poetry of Sudhindra N. Datta. Going to the roots is a fundamental, and, therefore, a revolutionary effort, even though it need not mean revolution. This point is missed by many leftist critics, even in the face of Marx's dictum.

33. Khandekar's *Doan Dhruva* (Marathi), P. N. Srivastava's *Vida,* Nirala's *Apsara,* the novel *Budhua ki Beti* by B. S. Ugra, L. N. Misra's drama *Mukta ka Rahasya* are typical of Hindi. Prem Chand's stories and novels are, of course, there.

34. Sailajananda, Premen Mitra, Manish Ghatak, Manik Banerji, particularly, have produced the *Bustee* literature.

35. Tara Shanker's *Kalindi* (Bengali) and various novels and stories. T. S. has got hold of a big idea, viz. historical change.

36. Leelavati Munshi's, for example.

37. Suniti K. Chatterjee (the philologist) on Java and Bali.

38. J. C. Ghosh in the *Legacy of India,* an otherwise penetrating essay.

39. e.g., Tagore's *Inaugural Address* at the Prabasi Bengali Sahitya Sammelan (Calcutta) and the letter written to Buddha Deb Bose, published after the Poet's death in the *Kavita.*

40. *Palataka* and *Punascha* are full of such poems.

41. Subhas Mukerji's *Padatik,* for example.

42. Samar Sen's *Nana Katha.*

43. Buddha Deb Bose's *Bandir Bandana.*

N.B.—The standard texts on Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Gujerati, and Marathi literatures have been consulted for this chapter. I have derived great benefit from discussions with men of letters, many of whom have kindly translated and explained their writings to me.

CHAPTER VI

* Besides the more well-known ones among the Sanskrit treatises, the following modern books have been used for this chapter. 1. Ayyar—*Thiagaraja*. 2. Sir S. M. Tagore's Works. 3. V. N. Bhatkhandeji's Works (Hindi) and his articles on the history of Hindustani Music in the XVI, XVII and XVIII centuries (Eng.). His lectures, above all. 4. F. Strangways—*Music of Hindustan*, 5. Clements—*Introduction to the Study of Indian Music*. 6. Popley—*Music of India*. 7. *South Indian Music Series*—P. Sambamoorthy. 8. *The Samgraha-Cuda-Mani* of Govinda and *Bahallara-Melakarta* of Venkata-Kavi, edited by S. S. Shastri. 9. Kristo Dhan Banerji's *Geeta-Sutra Sur* (with explanatory notes by H. Banerji). 10. O. C. Ganguly's *Ragas and Raginis*. 11. H. L. Roy—*Problems of Hindustani Music*. 12. R. L. Roy—*Rag Nirnaya*. 13. D. K. Roy's Bengali writings have been very helpful. 14. Kumar Birendra Kishore's articles are full of facts patiently collected. On Tagore's music his own letters are still the best. More important than these sources have been my personal contacts with musicians and scholars, among whom Rajah Nawab Ali and Principal Ratanjankar must be first mentioned. I do not propose to give detailed references; they will burden the book. I have, of course, drawn upon my own books and articles on different aspects of this subject. Readers may consult my *Int. to Indian Music* (English), *Katha O Sur* (Bengali) and *Sur O Samgati* (Bengali: a collection of letters between the author and Tagore on the aesthetics of Indian music).

CHAPTER VII

1. Jamini Roy—*Kabita* (Tagore number, Asarh 1348 Bengali year).

2. "It is in imitation of the angelic works of art that any work of art is accomplished here; for example, a clay elephant, a brazen object, a garment, a gold object, and mule chariot are works of art. A work of art, indeed, is accomplished in him who comprehends this. For these (angelic) works of Art are an integration of the Self; and by them the sacrificer likewise integrates himself in the mode of rhythm." Integration means *samskar,* or *katharsis.*

3. W. E. G. Solomon—*Mural Painting* (The Ajanta Caves) in *The Bombay Revival of Indian Art.*

4. A. K. Coomarswamy—*The Transformation of Nature in Art* (The Theory of Art in Asia, and in notes on pp. 175-76, and 186-189). See also his *Figures of Speech* or *Figures of Thought.*

5. *A. K. C's Transformation.* Ch. II. Also P. Sorokin—*Social and Cultural Dynamics,* Vol. I, Ch. 9.

6 Havell, O.C. Ganguly, N.C. Mehta and others with A. K. Coomarswamy at their head.

7. Nandlal Bose has shown in his marvellous sketches for students that the traditional is the real. Sri Aurobindo's *National Value of Art* combines the traditional values with those of national needs, which must ascend from the level of the purely aesthetic to the spiritual. He alone is aware of the dynamics of the process, and not content with interpretation. His dynamics of art-history will not be accepted by other historians of art. Ajit Ghose in his articles on Kalighat *pat* performs a service similar to Dr Tagore and N. L. Bose by showing the continuity of the *pat* with figures in the illuminated manuscript.

8. Some of the 'ugliest' traditional ikons are highly evocative while the modernized versions of the beautiful ones are positively repulsive to anybody with the slightest knowledge of symbols. Many of the idols of Durga in the

Sarbajaneen pujahs in Calcutta are realistically done, and attract the entire *bhadralok* community of the city. For sheer unrootedness, none to beat this crowd and for mere ugliness, nothing to beat the idols they admire.

9. *Sanskrit drama in Kerala*—Rajendra Shanker (Four Arts 1936-37).

10. Coomarswamy—Ibid. J. Maritain—*Art and Scholasticism* is a neo-Thomist interpretation. P. Gardiner—*The Principles of Christian Art.* H. Pierce and R. Taylor—*Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, and *East Christian Art;* they destroy the claim of uniqueness which Dr Mulk Raj Anand makes in *The Hindu View of Art*—pp. 37-48.

11. *The Heart of Aryavarta;* may be a case of the Tagore humour.

12. *Vide Malavika-agnimitram,* II. 1, *Uttara-ram charita,* 1. 39, *Mrchchhakatika,* III, 2-5. A. K. C. describes how Hem Chandra in *Trisastisalaka purusacaritra* classifies the effect of painting on various types of spectators—(*Reactions to Art in India*—Ibid. 105). Also in *Sakuntala* (VI, 13-14).

13. Sir Jamshetjee Jeejeebhoy's donation of a lakh of rupees was the foundation of the Bombay School of Art in 1854. The correspondence between the dates of deep Government solicitude for Indian art and of Indian political movements is also interesting; e.g., the terrorist movement in Bengal (1908-1909) and Government grant of Rs. 10,000 for O.A.S. in 1910, and the non-co-operation movement 1920-21, and the Bombay grant of Rs. 5,000 in 1922; which also proves that the terrorist movement was considered twice as dangerous.

14. A. K. Haldar—*Art and Tradition* (Twenty-five Years of contemporary Indian Painting) gives a running account. He gives a tree of three generations of Tagore's disciples. A further treatment has no scope here.

15. *The Bombay Revival of Indian Art* (published with the permission of the Government of Bombay).

16. Bombay also has the *Gujrat Kala Prabartak Mandal.* Its activities are not known. What is known is that Rawal and Kanu Desai have not yet succeeded in making Ahmedabad a

seat of Indian painting, in spite of the Tagore collection being there.

17. *The Cultural Heritage of India,* Vol. III—The Part of Art in Indian Life, pp. 510-13 should be read by everybody interested in the future of our culture.

18. Coomarswamy—*Trans. of Nature in Art.* He seems to follow Jung.

19. "If we take the sign for a symbol, we shall be sentimentalizing our notion of blue eyes, and if we take the symbol for a sign, we are reducing 'thought' to 'recognition'."—A. K. C. *"Paroksha"*, Ibid.

20. P. Sorokin discusses these theories threadbare by statistical analysis. Unfortunately, his data are not Indian. Yet they do not seem to take away anything valuable from his criticisms. *Social and Cultural Dynamics,* Vol. I (Fluctuations in Forms of Art).

21. P. Sorokin—Ibid.

22. Quoted by P. Sorokin.

23. *The Background of Art*—D. Talbot Rice, a little classic.

24. J. Maritain—*Art and Scholasticism.*

25. Eric Gill—*Art.*

26. Yone Noguchi—*Hiroshige.*

27. O. C. Ganguly's *Ragas and Raginis,* Vol. II.

28. This point could be further developed by a closer study of the reasons for the earlier development of literature in our modern culture, its correspondence with that of painting in the intermediate stage, and its final triumph over other forms of fine arts in the last. In the earlier patterns of our culture, the process is similar but not identical.

29. A. K. Haldar in the *Alaka* on Jamini Roy's paintings.

30. I am indebted to Prof. Suhrawardy and Mr S. N. Datta for further appreciation of Jamini Roy's paintings.

31. Jamini Roy—*Kabita.* Tagore appreciated this article. It is a pity that Indian painters are either silent about Tagore's paintings or talk loosely about them to cover their discomfiture. The best introductions to Tagore's paintings are (1) his own notes and explanations (2) M. Bidou's article (in the Paris

press) quoted in *The Rupam* April-July—Oct. 1930 and in the *Viswabharati* Birthday number, 1941, and (3) A. K. Coomarswamy's in *The Rupam,* Ibid.

32. Interesting work is being done in art-pedagogics in the Doon School by Mr. Khastagir.

33. Spear—*The Nabobs.*

34. S. K. Chatterji—*Origin and Development of the Bengali Language;* he has also written a separate paper on the influence of the Portuguese language upon the dialects.

35. 'The civic architecture of India in the XIX century', Percy Brown, *Calcutta Municipal Gazette,* 16th Anniversary November 1940. His *Indian Architecture* (2 Vols.) ends with the Islamic period.

36. *U.P. Census Report,* 1921.

37. Prof. Ghurye—*Salary and other Conditions of Work of Clerks in Bombay City*—Journal of the University of Bombay, Vol. IX, part 4, 1941—rent-proportion is not given.

38. Bharat's *Natya-shastra* is the main classic. M. Ghosh's edition of *Abhinaya Darpana, Bharata Tandava Lakshanam*—C. V. N. Nayadu, A. K. Coomarswamy's *Dance of Shiva and Mirror of Gestures* are the four indispensable books. A number of articles by Rajendra Shankar, Asoka Shastri, Haren Ghosh, R. B. Poduval, Uday Shankar and Miss M. McMarthy have appeared in various journals.

REFLECTIONS AND REMINISCENCES

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